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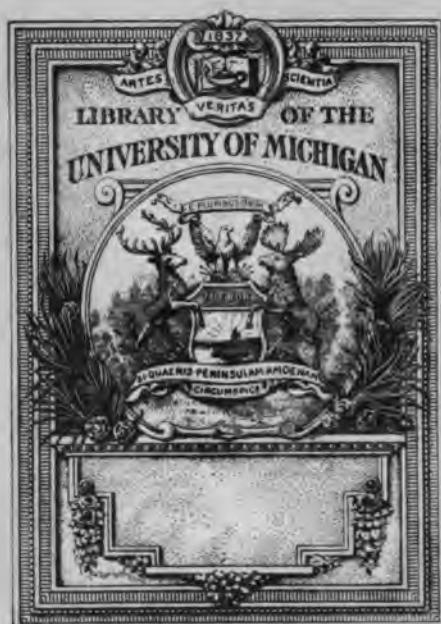
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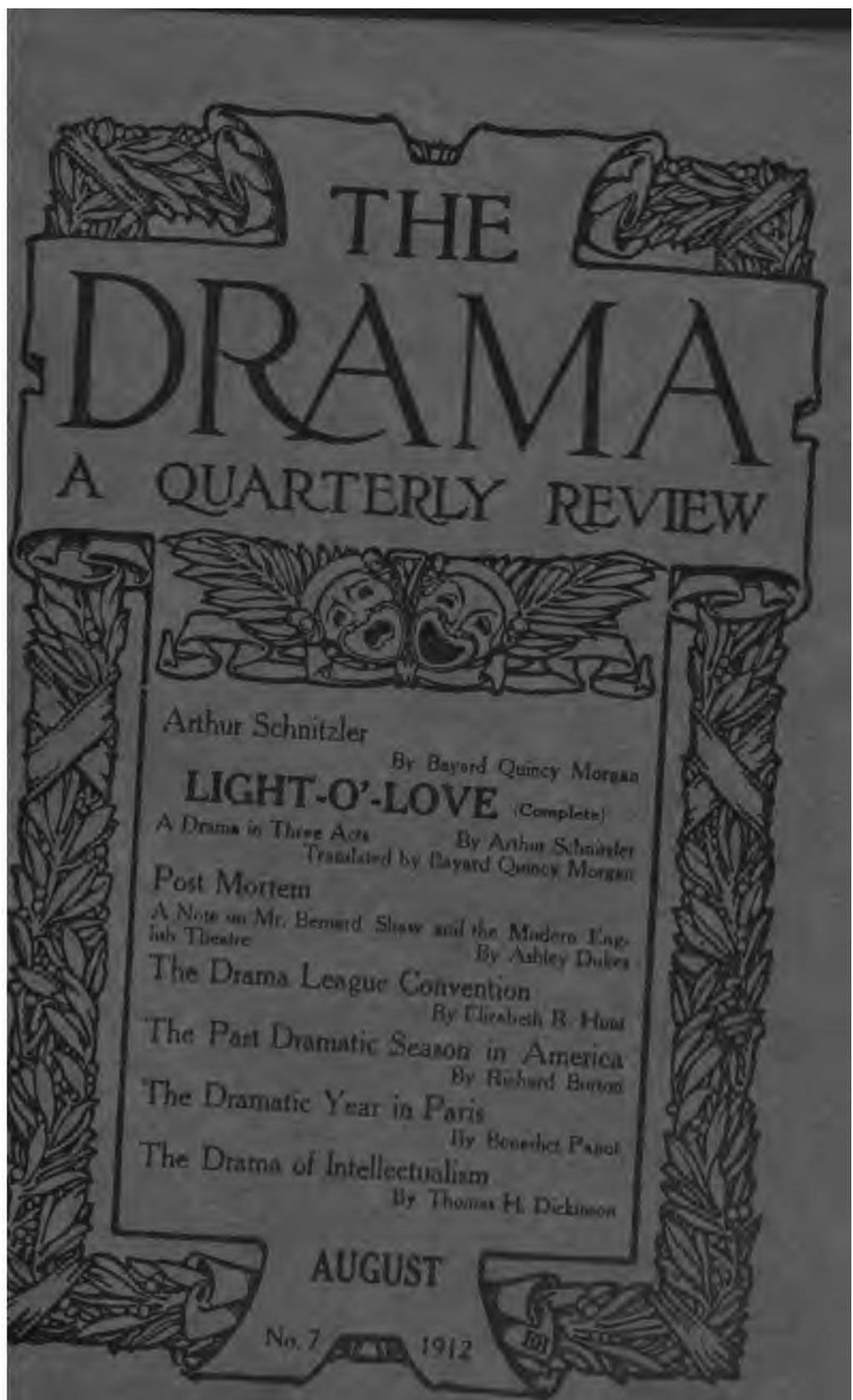
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# THE DRAMA

A QUARTERLY REVIEW OF DRAMATIC LITERATURE

EDITOR, CHARLES HUBBARD SERGEL

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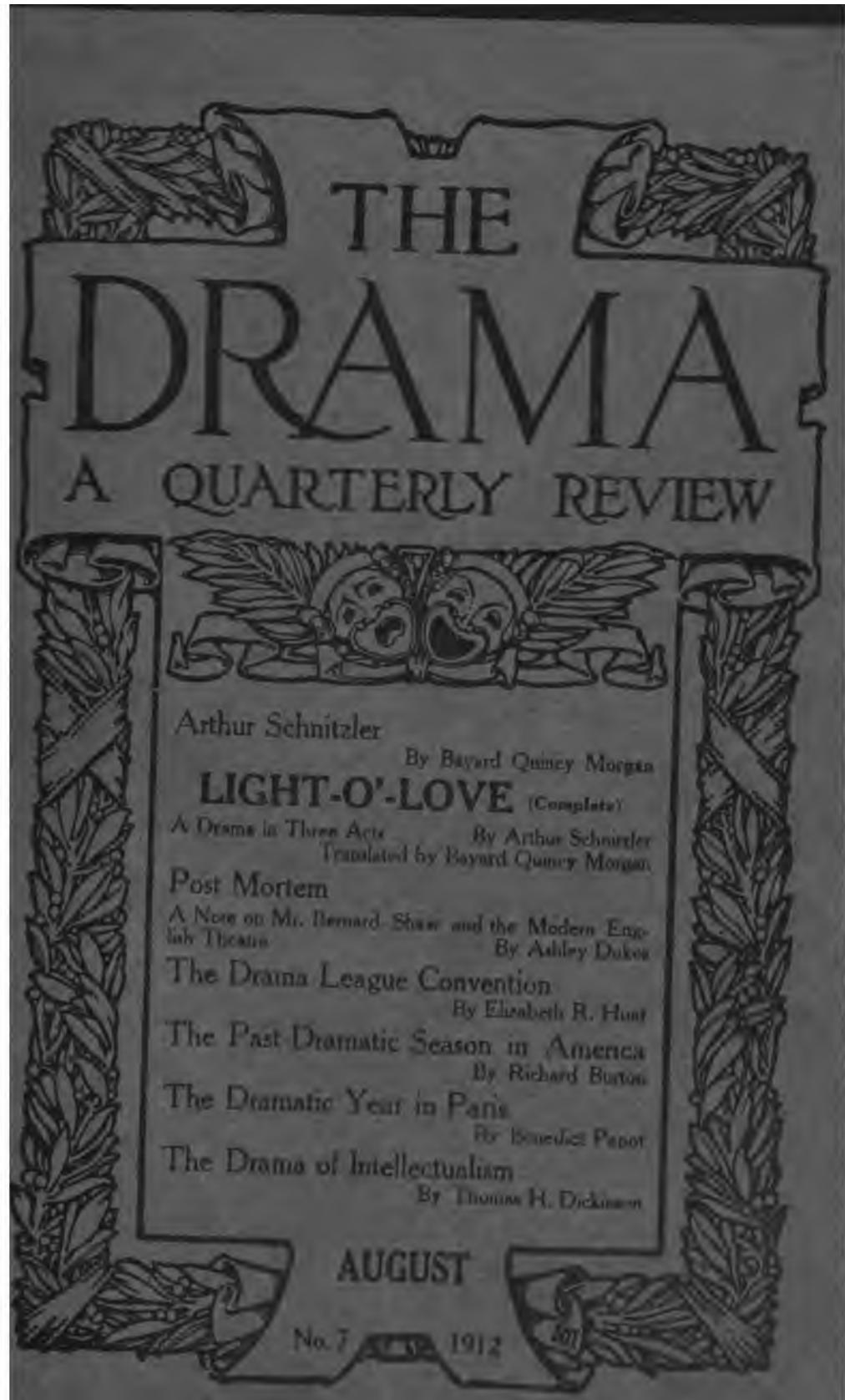
ARTHUR SCHNITZLER.

HEN an American author regularly produces one novel or play a year, and in some years two, we do not think of inquiring to what profession he belongs. One learns therefore with a start of surprise that Arthur Schnitzler, from whose pen no less than twenty-three volumes have appeared in print since 1892, who has reclaimed the one-act play as a serious literary form, who is called Austria's leading dramatist after Schönherr, and to whom was awarded the Grillparzer Prize in 1908, is a practicing physician. One feels an irresistible desire to ask him: When do you write your books? or: When do you see your patients?

Born in Vienna in 1862, the son of a professor in the medical faculty, he took his M. D. at the University of Vienna in 1885, was thereafter employed as assistant physician at the general hospital until 1888, and has since then been connected with the Clinical Hospital in addition to his activities as practitioner.

The physician often sees life in its sombrest aspect, for he learns to know men largely through their diseases. He encounters more frequently than





# THE DRAMA

## A QUARTERLY REVIEW

Arthur Schnitzler

By Bayard Quincy Morgan

### LIGHT-O'-LOVE (Complete)

A Drama in Three Acts

By Arthur Schnitzler

Translated by Bayard Quincy Morgan

### Post Mortem

A Note on Mr. Bernard Shaw and the Modern English Theatre

By Ashley Dukes

### The Drama League Convention

By Elizabeth R. Hunt

### The Past Dramatic Season in America

By Richard Burton

### The Dramatic Year in Paris

By Benedict Peper

### The Drama of Intellectualism

By Thomas H. Dickson

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upon the soldier shoots him down in cold blood. A conflict of a different sort appears in *Der einsame Weg* ("The Lonely Road"). Here Schnitzler appears to have taken a leaf out of Anzengruber's book, for he treats a problem exactly parallel to that of the latter's novel *Der Schandfleck* ("The Blot of Shame"). In both a man brings up as his own the child of his wife by another man; only Anzengruber's hero knows it. In both cases the real father reveals the truth to the child, seeking comfort for a lonely old age; only Anzengruber's heroine has already learned the truth from her foster-father. In both the child turns to the only father it has ever known, leaving the real father to go his lonely road.

At this point may also be mentioned a series of four one-act plays which illustrate in different ways a more spiritual conflict, that between the practical and the artistic view of life. It is shown most clearly in the first play of the series, entitled *Lebensdige Stunden* ("Living Hours"). This is a dialog between an affectionate son and a devoted friend of his mother. Her death has crushed the older man, but has freed the young poet for new creative work. In wild jealousy and resentment the former reveals the mother's secret, namely, that she ended her own life of incurable suffering in order that her son might be set free by it. Overwhelmed at first, he later rises to new creative power, accepting the mother's sacrifice. In the second piece of the group the conflict is not brought out so clearly. *Die Frau mit dem Dolche* ("The Woman with the Dagger") is the title of a picture in which a painter's wife recognizes a previous incarnation of herself. Irresistibly she is led to repeat the same course as that taken by the pictured woman. This leads first to the betrayal of her husband, and finally to her lover's

death by her own hand. Her deed inspires her husband to a new work of the highest art. High above the rest of the series, and rated as only inferior to *Der grüne Kakadu* is *Die letzten Masken* ("The Final Mask"). The two view-points are here represented by two quondam friends, both poets, one of whom is famous and rich, the other poor and sick, and waiting for death in a hospital. The poor but great-souled journalist calls his really shallow colleague to his death-bed, in order to pour out the vials of his wrath upon him. But when the petty "great" man comes, he feels the uselessness of attempting to open his eyes, and turns over to die contentedly, in the consciousness of his own greater worth. "Literature," the last of the series, is a farce, but a brilliant one.

*A priori* one would not expect Schnitzler to achieve success in the historical drama. Yet he has twice tried his hand at it. In *Der junge Medardus* he takes us back to the Napoleonic wars. Medardus sets out to assassinate the emperor, but instead turns his dagger upon the woman who urges him on to the deed, because she has been accused of being Napoleon's mistress. The author's dialog is his undoing in this work. He is so concerned to produce atmosphere and setting that the dramatic action vanishes from view.

His most ambitious drama so far, though not his most successful, is the other historical play, *Der Schleier der Beatrice* ("Beatrice's Veil"). In it he attempts a canvas of more than Shakespearean proportions. No less than fifty-three speaking parts are listed, besides all the mute figures which fill the background at various times. The scene is laid in Bologna of the sixteenth century, and the central figure, next to the Beatrice of the title, is the reign-

ing duke, Leonardo Bentivoglio; and this again reminds of Shakespeare. If we add the great length of the drama, five acts, covering two hundred and fifteen pages, and the alternation of blank verse and prose, with an occasional happy turn of speech, we have all the elements that justify a comparison with Shakespearean art. Certainly any deeper similarity is lacking. The great canvas merely confuses; the verse, while smooth and even elegant at times, shows no sign of greatness; and the length deadens the effect and breaks up the unity of the conception. Worse than all, the magnificent reality and life of Shakespeare's characters is wholly lacking; the personages of this play are not convincing; they are not alive.

The action centers around Beatrice, the wonderfully beautiful sixteen-year-old daughter of a petty merchant. She is loved by Filippo Loschi, a brave nobleman and celebrated poet. For her sake he forsakes his betrothed, Teresina, sister of Count Andrea Santuzzi, and for her he is ready to forsake honor and his native city as well. But Beatrice has day-dreamed that she was the consort of the handsome and valiant duke, and therefore Filippo thrusts her from him. She goes and is ready to yield to the wish of her brother that she marry a young man of her own station. On the way to the church they are met by the duke, who loves her and confesses his love. She does not say no, but demands that he make her his wife. He at once makes preparations for the ceremony, and opens up his own gardens for a bacchanalian festival. The city has been invested by the enemy; death may come to all on the morrow; it behooves them to make the most of the fleeting moments ere they pass. Beatrice steals away from the tumult of the festival to go to Filippo,

whom she really loves. He proposes to her that they drink death together after their night of love. She professes willingness, but when he puts her to the test by pretending that she has already drunk poison with him, her dread of death reveals itself, and Filippo drinks the real poison alone. Overcome with horror, she hastens back to the duke, forgetting however her veil. She endeavors to cover up what she has done with lies, but is in the end induced by fear of death to lead the duke to Filippo's house. He understands and forgives, saying:

"Wast thou not Beatrice, a simple child,  
That played with crown and throne, because they glittered,  
And with a poet's soul, because mysterious,  
And with a stripling's heart, because forsooth  
'Twas given thee? But we are too severe  
And suffer 't not, and each of us demanded  
Not only that he be the only plaything—more,  
The world and all to thee. And thee we chid  
A traitress, wicked—and thou wast a child!"

These words would seem to hold the key to the involved happenings of the play, but they do not explain away the unreality of the actors. The fundamental idea of the drama, on the other hand, seems to be the sardonically emphasized juxtaposition of love and death. Since death threatens on the morrow, let us enjoy our love. This feature, in varying expressions, recurs again and again; one of its manifestations is Beatrice's own horror of death, which she herself admits at the last, and in so doing attempts to justify her strange conduct. The Duke has said to her mother:

"Thou hast thy daughter now, and she is free—  
And Beatrice, do thou lay fear aside—

She replies, kneeling by Filippo's corpse:

All that is past! And yet 'twas that alone  
That urged me on through all these devious paths  
From lie to lie, from shame to shame . . . And all  
Because I shuddered at the thought of lying  
In death, as thou now liest . . .

And why must I, just I, be singled out  
To bring such sorrow to so many, knowing  
I meant to wrong no one!

I now come to that type of subject which is evidently Schnitzler's favorite, and in which he has scored his greatest successes—and his greatest failures. Whether he merely follows one marked trend of the naturalistic school, or a strong individual bent, it is certain that his work is characterized by a steady, almost morbid, insistence upon man's sexual life. It crops out again and again, and amounts at times to a veritable obsession. No one will deny that the sexual impulse is one of the most powerful natural forces in the world. But to make sexual intercourse the equivalent of life itself, as Schnitzler does in *Der Ruf des Lebens* ("The Call of Life"), can only be called an outrageous distortion of normal humanity. The central figures of this drama are two young girls of humble station. One, foreseeing early death by consumption, flings herself open-eyed into the gutter. The other rushes over her father's murdered body, past the fresh corpse of a faithless wife, into the arms of the latter's paramour. And both, we are given to understand, are following simply the "call of life."

Something of this unnatural emphasis on the sexual life is to be found in "Anatol," his first publication. This strange book consists of a series of seven one-act pieces, each of which centers about an affair between the young man of this name and a different woman. Now it is a girl from the ballet, now a bare-back rider from the circus, now a weak married woman; once he is about to marry a self-confessed harlot, but leaves her after all; in the final piece he is seen on his wedding morning, and his friend Max is compelled to assist him in getting rid of the imperious beauty who has spent the night with him. Note-

worthy is *Die Frage an das Schicksal* ("Questioning Fate"), in which Anatol hypnotizes the girl in order to ask her if she has been true to him, and fails to put the question in the end. Noteworthy also is the little dialogue, *Weihnachtseinkäufe* ("Christmas Presents"), which reminds one of Hope's "Dolly Dialogues," although it is far less clever. Here Anatol encounters a married woman whom he has loved before she married, and who, it appears, was not wholly indifferent to him; she sends flowers by him to his present *inamorata*.

Essentially sexual problems are also involved in his *Zwischenspiel* ("Intermezzo"). The plot consists of the separation, reunion, and second separation of a married couple, the wife being the prime mover in each case, and the motive force a thirst for "adventures," i. e., love affairs. The characters are not alive, and the work has passed almost unnoticed. Just the contrary is true of his *Reigen*, which attracted so much attention that its publication was forbidden. This is again a series of swift dialogs, in which the slender thread of connection leads us back to the point from which we started.

In this field lies Schnitzler's highest dramatic achievement thus far. It is his *Liebelei* ("Light-o'-Love"), of which *Das Vermächtnis* ("The Legacy") is a rather feeble echo. The "Legacy" is the posthumous illegitimate child of a young aristocratic rake; when the child dies, the mother is cast out of his family. In "Light-o'-Love" the action is more firmly knit, and the result is a superb achievement of its kind.

The story of the play is as follows: Fritz Loheimer, a young and wealthy student, has been drawn into an intrigue with a beautiful young married woman. The *liaison* puts a heavy drain on

his nerves, for she fears that they are watched, and her fears are communicated to him. His friend and fellow-student, Theodore Kaiser, worried by his rundown condition, attempts to cure him of the one passion by leading him into one of a different kind. On one occasion Theodore induces Toni Schlager, a young milliner's assistant, for whom he has a momentary infatuation, to bring her prettiest acquaintance to the meeting, while he himself brings Fritz. Although Fritz is not sufficiently touched to break off the first affair, he does feel the charm of the young girl, and his meetings with her help to soothe his ragged nerves. Theodore invites the two girls to his friend's apartments, hoping in this way to help him over one of his bad hours. While they are in the midst of their merriment, the bell rings, and Fritz finds his worst fears realized. The intrigue is discovered, and he sees clearly that he must fall in the ensuing duel. From this point the interest centers in Christine, the "Light-o'-Love." The daughter of a poor man, she has lived quietly in her modest little home, working for her father, and knowing few pleasures, if also few sorrows. To her, who has never come in contact with men, Fritz is like a being from another world, and the whole power of her fresh womanhood is thrown into the love she gives him. He is for her, as she puts it, her God and her bliss of Heaven; and while she harbors no illusions as to the permanence of Fritz's love for her, she has never been able to contemplate losing him. The second act is devoted chiefly to a careful development of her character and her attitude toward Fritz. And on the other hand, an added touch of pathos results from the fact that for the first time Fritz begins to realize, dimly, it is true, what she is and what she might be to him. His

nature is kindled by the pure fire of her spirit, and when he bids her farewell, leaving her, as he knows, forever, it is with the pang of one who may look into the open gate of Heaven, but may not enter in.

The third act, two days after the duel, centers about Christine's discovery of the whole truth about Fritz. Pain at his death is swallowed up in the greater grief caused by the manner of it. She is beside herself at the thought that he never loved her; that she was merely a pastime to him; that he could leave her with a smile to go and be shot down for another woman. But when she learns that he has already been buried, and that she cannot even see his face once more, her anguish passes all bounds, and she rushes forth to seek his grave—and die upon it.

The synopsis shows the firm, clear-cut lines of the play, its steady and well-planned development, its fine climax. But it has the further merit, which cannot be allowed all of Schnitzler's dramas, that the characters are really alive and convincing. Not merely the main figures live, but also Christine's old father, her prying but kindly neighbor Catherine —yes, and even the wronged husband, who appears but once, and is ominously styled simply "The Gentleman." And the character drawing is executed with the lightest possible touch, built up line by line out of seemingly flimsy dialog, but with masterly precision.

One of Schnitzler's earliest works, *Liebelei* remains his high-water mark in the drama, and in view of the distinct limitations of his art, it may be doubted whether he will ever rise above it, or even reach it again. Certainly nothing he has done since has justified the hope it raised, that in Arthur Schnitzler might be found a new and powerful prophet of the naturalistic school.

BAYARD QUINCY MORGAN.

## LIGHT-O'-LOVE.

A Drama in Three Acts, by Arthur Schnitzler.  
Translated by Bayard Quincy Morgan.

### DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

**HANS VYRING**, violinist at the city theatre.

**CHRISTINE**, his daughter.

**TONI SCHLAGER**, milliner.

**CATHERINE BINDEE**, wife of a stocking-maker.

**LENA**, her nine-year-old daughter.

**Fritz Loheimer**, }  
**Theodore Kaiser**, } young men.

**A GENTLEMAN**.

**SCENE**, Vienna. **TIME**, the present.

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# LIGHT-O'-LOVE

A Drama in Three Acts, by Arthur Schnitzler.

## ACT I.

[FRITZ's room. *Cozy but elegantly furnished.*]

THEODORE. [Enters in advance. He carries a stick, has an overcoat flung over his arm; takes off his hat upon entering.]

FRITZ. [Outside.] So nobody has been here?

VOICE. No, sir.

FRITZ. [Entering.] I suppose we might let the carriage go?

THEODORE. Of course. I thought you had.

FRITZ. [Goes to the door.] Send the carriage away. And . . . you can go, too. I don't need you any more. [Returning.] Why don't you lay down your things?

THEODORE. [At the desk.] Here are a couple of letters. [Throws coat and hat on a chair, keeps his stick.]

FRITZ. [Hastens to the desk.] Oh! . . .

THEODORE. Now, now! . . . I believe you're frightened!

FRITZ. From dad. . . . [Opens a second letter.] From Lensky.

THEODORE. Don't let me disturb you.

FRITZ. [Skims the letters.]

THEODORE. What does your father say?

FRITZ. Nothing special. . . . He wants me to spend a week on the estate at Whitsuntide.

THEODORE. Excellent plan. I'd like to send you there for six months.

FRITZ. [Turns to face him.]

THEODORE. I certainly would! — riding, driving, fresh air, dairy-maids—

FRITZ. Idiot, there aren't any dairy-farms out there.

THEODORE. Well, you know what I mean, don't you?

FRITZ. Will you come along?

THEODORE. You know I can't.

FRITZ. Why not?

THEODORE. My dear fellow, I have my doctor's exam. coming! If I went along, it would only be for the sake of keeping you there.

FRITZ. Oh, come, you needn't worry about me.

THEODORE. You see, all you need is fresh air; I'm convinced of that—I saw that to-day. Out yonder in the open, where we found the genuine green springtime, you were a very pleasant fellow again.

FRITZ. Thanks.

THEODORE. And now—now of course you are collapsing. We're too close to the dangerous atmospheric zone again.

FRITZ. [Makes a gesture of irritation.]

THEODORE. Why, you've no idea how jolly you were out there. You were actually reasonable for once; it was like the good old days. And then a couple of days ago, when we were out with those two jolly little girls, you were very nice; but now—that's all over again, and you find it absolutely necessary to think — [With ironical pathos.] — of that woman.

FRITZ. [Rises, vexed.]

THEODORE. You don't know me, my dear fellow. I don't intend to stand that any longer.

FRITZ. My goodness, but you're ambitious!

THEODORE. Oh, I don't demand of you that you

forget—[*As before.*]—that woman. . . . I only hope — [Warmly.] — my dear Fritz, that this miserable affair, that keeps me trembling for you all the time, means no more to you than any trivial love affair. . . . Look here, Fritz, some day, when you stop worshiping “that woman,” you’ll be surprised how congenial she is to you. Then you’ll find out that there’s nothing demoniac in her at all, but that she is a very sweet little woman—one that you can have plenty of fun with, just as you can with all women that are young and pretty, and that have a little temperament.

Fritz. Why do you say “tremble for me”?

Theodore. You know why. . . . I must confess that I am in constant terror that you will run off with her some fine day.

Fritz. That was what you meant!

Theodore. [After a short pause.] That isn’t the only danger.

Fritz. Right you are, Theodore—there are others, too.

Theodore. But then we never do anything silly.

Fritz. [To himself.] There are others, too. . . .

Theodore. What’s the matter? . . . You’re thinking of something in particular.

Fritz. Oh, no, I’m not. . . . [Glances at the window.] She was deceived once before.

Theodore. What? . . . What’s that? . . . I don’t understand you.

Fritz. Oh, nothing.

Theodore. What? Do talk sense.

Fritz. She’s been afraid lately . . . at times.

Theodore. Why?—There must be a reason for it.

Fritz. Not at all. Nervousness—[Ironically.]—an uneasy conscience, if you will.

Theodore. You say she was deceived once—

FRITZ. Well, yes—and again to-day, I suppose.

THEODORE. To-day—well, what does all this mean?

FRITZ. [After a slight pause.] She thinks . . . we are watched.

THEODORE. What?

FRITZ. She sees apparitions; really, she has actual hallucinations. [At the window.] She sees some person standing on the street corner, . . . through the crack in the curtain, and thinks—[Breaks off.] Is it possible, anyway, to recognize a face at this distance?

THEODORE. Scarcely.

FRITZ. Why, that's what I say. But then that's terrible. She's afraid to go out; she has all sorts of queer feelings; she gets hysterical; she wants to die with me—

THEODORE. Of course.

FRITZ. [Short pause.] To-day I had to go down and take a look. Went down as cheerfully as if I were leaving the house alone; of course there wasn't a familiar face to be seen anywhere. . . .

THEODORE. [Is silent.]

FRITZ. Well, that ought to set fears at rest, oughtn't it? A man can't suddenly be swallowed up by the earth, hey? . . . Answer, can't you?

THEODORE. What sort of an answer do you want? Of course a man can't be swallowed up. But a man can hide inside the gates.

FRITZ. I looked behind them all.

THEODORE. You must have looked very innocent at that.

FRITZ. There was nobody there. I tell you it's hallucinations.

THEODORE. Certainly. But it ought to teach you to be more careful.

FRITZ. And I couldn't have helped knowing it, if

*he* suspected it. Why, I ate supper with them yesterday after the play—with *him* and *her*—and it was so pleasant! . . . ridiculous, I tell you!

THEODORE. I beg of you, Fritz, be sensible; do me that favor. Give up this whole cursed affair, for *my* sake, if nothing else. I have nerves, too. . . . I know you're not the kind of man who can escape from such an affair unaided, and so I made it so easy for you—gave you a chance to save yourself by starting another. . . .

FRITZ. You did?

THEODORE. Well, didn't I take you along with me when I had an appointment with little Miss Toni a while back? And didn't I ask her to bring along her prettiest friend? And can you deny that you like her?

FRITZ. Certainly, she is sweet! . . . So sweet! And you have no idea how I longed for such an affection as that, so sweet and quiet, that would hover about me and soothe me, and help me to recover from these everlasting irritations and torments.

THEODORE. That's exactly it. Recover! That's the deeper purpose of it. They help us to recover. That's why I'm against these so-called interesting women. It's not the business of women to be interesting, but to be agreeable. You must seek happiness where I have sought and found it—where there are no grand scenes, no dangers, no tragic entanglements—where the beginning has no special difficulties, and the ending no torments—where you take your first kiss with a smile, and part with *very* gentle emotion.

FRITZ. Yes, that's it.

THEODORE. Those women are so happy in their

healthy every-day womanhood—what compels us to make demons or angels out of them at all costs?

FRITZ. She is really a treasure. So affectionate, so dear. Often it seems to me she is too dear for me.

THEODORE. You're incorrigible, apparently. If you intend to take *that* affair seriously again. . . .

FRITZ. No, no, not a thought of it. We are agreed: I need to recover.

THEODORE. If you did, I'd give you up for good. I've had enough of your love-tragedies. You bore me with them. And if you feel like coming at me with your famous "conscience," I'll give you my simple rule for treating such cases: Better it were I than some one else. For that "some one else" is as sure as fate itself.

[*There is a ring.*]

FRITZ. What's that now? . . .

THEODORE. Go and see. There you are, all pale again! Set your fears at rest. It's the two sweet little girls.

FRITZ. [*Agreeably surprised.*] What?

THEODORE. I took the liberty of inviting them here to-day.

FRITZ. [*Going out.*] Oh, you—why didn't you tell me? Now I've sent away my man.

THEODORE. So much the cozier.

FRITZ. [*Outside.*] Greetings, Toni.

TONI. [*Enters, carrying a package.*]

FRITZ. [*Re-enters behind her.*] And where's Christine?

TONI. She'll be here soon. Greetings, Dore.

THEODORE. [*Kisses her hand.*]

TONI. You'll have to excuse us, Mr. Fritz; but Theodore invited us. . . .

FRITZ. Why, it was a splendid idea. Only he forgot something, Theodore did.

THEODORE. Theodore forgot nothing! [Takes the package from TONI.] Did you bring everything I wrote down for you?

TONI. Of course. [To FRITZ.] Where can I put it?

FRITZ. Just give it to me, Toni; we'll put it on the sideboard for the present.

TONI. I bought something else, Dore, besides what you told me.

FRITZ. Give me your hat, Toni, that's right.  
[Lays it on the piano, also her boa.]

THEODORE. [Dubiously.] What?

TONI. A coffee cream-cake.

THEODORE. Oh, what a sweet tooth!

FRITZ. Well, but tell me, why didn't Christine come with you?

TONI. She's going to take her father to the theatre first. Then she'll come along on the street car.

THEODORE. What an affectionate daughter! . . .

TONI. I should say so, and especially since he went into mourning.

THEODORE. Why, who died there, anyway?

TONI. The old gentleman's sister.

THEODORE. Ah, a widow?

TONI. No, it was an old maiden lady, who has lived with them always. Well, and so he feels so lonesome, somehow.

THEODORE. He's a little man with short gray hair—her father—isn't he?

TONI. [Shakes her head.] No, he has long hair.

FRITZ. How do you come to know him?

THEODORE. Recently I was in the theatre with Lensky, and I took a look at the men playing the bass-viols.

TONI. Why, he doesn't play the bass-viol—he plays the violin.

THEODORE. Oh, is that so? I thought he played the bass-viol. [TONI laughs.] Nothing funny about that; how should I know, child?

TONI. What a beautiful place you have, Mr. Fritz—just wonderful! What view is that?

FRITZ. This window opens on Straw Lane, and in the next room—

THEODORE. [Quickly.] Do tell me, why are you so formal, you two?

TONI. At supper we'll get better acquainted.

THEODORE. A lady of principle, I see. Well, that's some comfort, just the same. How's your mother, anyhow?

TONI. [Turns to him, her face suddenly showing concern.] Only think, she's got—

THEODORE. Toothache, I know, I know. Your mother always has the toothache. She ought to go to a dentist one of these times.

TONI. But the doctor says it's only rheumatic pains.

THEODORE. [Laughing.] Well, if it's rheumatic . . .

TONI. [An album in her hand.] Nothing but pretty things! [Turning the pages.] Who is that? . . . Why, that's you, Mr. Fritz, . . . in uniform? You're in the army?

FRITZ. Yes.

TONI. Dragoon!—Are you in the yellows or the blacks?

FRITZ. [Smiling.] In the yellows.

TONI. [As in a reverie.] The yellows.

THEODORE. There she goes a-dreaming. Wake up, Toni!

TONI. But now you're lieutenant in the reserves!

FRITZ. Surely.

TONI. You must look very nice in the fur cap.

THEODORE. How much she knows about it!—Look here, Toni, I'm in the army, too.

TONI. Are you in the dragoons, too?

THEODORE. Yes.

TONI. Well, why can't you tell a body that?

THEODORE. I want to be loved for myself.

TONI. Come, Dore, you must put on your uniform some time when we're going out together.

THEODORE. In August there will be manœuvres, anyway.

TONI. Heavens! by August—

THEODORE. Yes, that's so—eternal love doesn't last that long.

TONI. Who thinks about August in May? Isn't that so, Mr. Fritz?—Say, Mr. Fritz, why did you run away from us yesterday?

FRITZ. What do you mean?

TONI. Why—after the play.

FRITZ. Didn't Theodore make my excuses to you?

THEODORE. To be sure, I excused you.

TONI. What good do your excuses do me, or rather Christine? When a man makes a promise, he ought to keep it.

FRITZ. I really would rather have gone with you.

TONI. Really?

FRITZ. But I couldn't. You saw yourselves I was in a box with friends, and afterward I couldn't get away from them.

TONI. Yes, you couldn't get away from the pretty ladies. Do you think we didn't see you from the gallery?

FRITZ. Well, I saw you, too.

TONI. You were sitting backwards in the box.

FRITZ. Not all the time.

TONI. But most of it. Behind a lady with a black

velvet dress you sat and kept—[*Imitating.*]—looking forward like this.

FRITZ. You must have watched me closely.

TONI. Why, it's nothing to me. But if I were Christine . . . Why did Theodore have time after the play? Why doesn't he have to take supper with friends?

THEODORE. [*Proudly.*] Why don't I have to take supper with friends?

[*There is a ring.* FRITZ hastens out.]

THEODORE. Toni, you can do me a favor.

TONI. [*Assumes questioning expression.*]

THEODORE. Forget your military recollections—at least, for a time.

TONI. Why, I haven't any.

THEODORE. Come, now, you didn't learn all that just by accident, that's plain enough.

CHRISTINE. [*Enters with flowers in her hand.* FRITZ behind her. *With a trace of embarrassment.*] Good-evening. [General salutation. To FRITZ.] Are you glad we came?—You're not angry?

FRITZ. But—my dear child! Sometimes, you know, Theodore is cleverer than I am.

THEODORE. Well, is your father fiddling by now?

CHRISTINE. Surely; I took him to the theatre.

FRITZ. Toni told us.

CHRISTINE. [To TONI.] And Catherine stopped me, too.

TONI. Oh, pshaw! the false cat!

CHRISTINE. Oh, no, she isn't false at all; she is very good to me.

TONI. You trust every one, anyway.

CHRISTINE. Why should she be false to me?

FRITZ. Who is Catherine?

TONI. The wife of a stocking-maker; and she's

always vexed because some girls are younger than she is.

CHRISTINE. Why, she's quite young herself.

FRITZ. Bother Catherine!—What have you got there?

CHRISTINE. I brought along a few flowers for you.

FRITZ. [Takes them from her and kisses her hand.] You're a little angel. Here, we'll put them in the vase.

THEODORE. No, no! You've no talent as decorator. The flowers will be scattered at random on the table. . . . That is, later on, when the table is set. We really ought to fix it so that they would fall from the ceiling. But that can't be done.

FRITZ. [Laughing.] Scarcely.

THEODORE. Meanwhile we'll put them in here, after all. [Puts them into the vase.]

TONI. Children, it's getting dark!

FRITZ. [Helps CHRISTINE to take off her coat, and she takes off her hat. He puts hat and coat on a chair in the background.] We'll light the lamp right away.

THEODORE. Lamp! I should say not! Candles we must have. Their light is so much prettier. Come, Toni, you can help me. [He and TONI light the candles, in the branched candelabra before the pier-glass, one on the desk, two candles on the sideboard. Meanwhile FRITZ and CHRISTINE converse.]

FRITZ. How are you, sweetheart?

CHRISTINE. I'm all right now.

FRITZ. Well, but not at other times!

CHRISTINE. I have longed so for you.

FRITZ. Why, we saw each other only yesterday.

CHRISTINE. Saw each other . . . from away off.

. . . [Shyly.] Fritz, it wasn't very nice of you to . . .

FRITZ. Yes, I know; Toni told me. But you're always a child. I couldn't get away. You've got to understand such things.

CHRISTINE. Yes. . . . Fritz, . . . who were the people in the box?

FRITZ. Friends of mine—it doesn't matter what their names are.

CHRISTINE. Well, who was the lady in the black velvet dress?

FRITZ. Child, I have no memory for dresses.

CHRISTINE. [Coaxingly.] Come, come!

FRITZ. That is to say, . . . I do have a sort of a memory for them—in certain cases. For example, I remember very well that dark-blue waist you had on the first time we saw each other. And the black and white one you wore to the theatre yesterday.

CHRISTINE. Why, I'm wearing it to-day!

FRITZ. Sure enough; . . . from a distance, you know, it looks different—I mean it! Oh, and that medallion—I know that, too.

CHRISTINE. [Smiling.] When did I wear that?

FRITZ. Oh,—that time we went walking in the public gardens, where all the children were playing—isn't that right?

CHRISTINE. Yes. . . . So you do think of me sometimes?

FRITZ. Rather frequently, my child.

CHRISTINE. Not so often as I think of you. I am always thinking of you . . . all day long, . . . and I can only be happy when I see you.

FRITZ. Then don't we see each other often enough?

CHRISTINE. Often . . .

FRITZ. Certainly. In the summer we shan't see

each other so much. Just think! Suppose, for example, I went away for a couple of weeks—what would you say?

CHRISTINE. [Anxiously.] What? You are going away?

FRITZ. No. . . . And still it might be possible that I would like the notion of being all alone for a week.

CHRISTINE. Oh, why?

FRITZ. I'm simply talking about possibilities. I know myself, I get such notions. And you, too, might some time take the whim of not wanting to see me for a few days. . . . I'll always understand that.

CHRISTINE. No, I'll never have that whim, Fritz.

FRITZ. You can't tell about that.

CHRISTINE. But I can. . . . I love you.

FRITZ. I love you, too, very much.

CHRISTINE. But you are everything to me, Fritz; for you I could—[Breaks off.] No, I can't imagine an hour ever coming when I wouldn't want to see you. As long as I live, Fritz—

FRITZ. [Interrupts.] Child, I beseech you, . . . don't say anything like that. . . . I don't like big words. We won't talk about eternity.

CHRISTINE. [Smiling sadly.] Have no fear, Fritz. . . . I know this can't be for always.

FRITZ. You misunderstand me, child. Of course it's possible—[Laughing.]—that we simply won't be able to live without each other, but we can't tell for sure, can we? We're only human.

THEODORE. [Pointing to the lighted candles.] Kindly turn your eyes upon that. . . . Isn't that different from a stupid lamp?

FRITZ. You're really a born decorator.

THEODORE. Children, what do you say—shall we think about eating?

TONI. Yes! . . . Come, Christine.

FRITZ. Wait; I'll show you where to find everything.

TONI. First of all, we need a table-cloth.

THEODORE. [With German accent, as on the vaudeville stage.] "A table-cot'?"

FRITZ. What?

THEODORE. Don't you remember that fellow in the Orpheum? "Dot is a table-clot'." "Dot is a shtool." "Dot is a liddle pianino."

TONI. Say, Dore, when are you going to the Orpheum with me? You promised me a little while ago. Then Christine will come along, and Mr. Fritz, too. [She is just taking from FRITZ the table-cloth which he has taken out of the sideboard.] Then we'll be your friends in the box.

FRITZ. Yes, yes.

TONI. Then the lady with the black velvet dress can go home alone.

FRITZ. Why do you keep thinking about that lady in black? It's too stupid.

TONI. Oh, we don't think about her. . . . There. . . . And the silver? [FRITZ shows her the things in the open sideboard.] Yes. . . . And the plates? . . . Yes, thanks. . . . There, now we can do it alone all right. Go, go away now, you're only getting in our way.

THEODORE. [Has meanwhile stretched out on the couch; FRITZ advances toward him.] You'll excuse me.

TONI. Did you see the picture of Fritz in his uniform?

CHRISTINE. No.

TONI. You must have a look at it. Swell! [*They talk on.*]

THEODORE. Such evenings are my delight, Fritz.

FRITZ. Well, they *are* nice.

THEODORE. Then I feel so cozy. . . . Don't you?

FRITZ. Oh, I wish I could always feel so contented.

TONI. Tell me, Mr. Fritz, is there coffee in the machine?

FRITZ. Yes. You can start the lamp under it right away—it takes a good hour on that machine, before the coffee is done.

THEODORE. I'd give a dozen demoniac women for a sweet girl like that.

FRITZ. There's no comparison.

THEODORE. You see, we hate the women that we love—and only love the women that are indifferent to us.

FRITZ. [*Laughs.*]

TONI. What's the joke? We'd like to hear it, too.

THEODORE. Nothing for you, children. We're philosophizing.—If this were to be our last meeting with these girls, we'd be just as jolly, wouldn't we?

FRITZ. The last time! . . . Well, there's certainly something melancholy about that. Parting always gives pain, even if you've been looking forward to it eagerly for a long time.

CHRISTINE. Say, Fritz, where's the small silver?

FRITZ. [*Goes rear to the sideboard.*] Here it is, sweetheart.

TONI. [*Comes forward, runs her hand through THEODORE's hair; he still reclining on the couch.*]

THEODORE. You pussy-cat!

FRITZ. [*Opens the package TONI brought.*] Grand!

CHRISTINE. [To FRITZ.] You have everything in such good order.

FRITZ. Yes. [*Arranges the things Toni brought — sardines, cold meat, butter, cheese.*]

CHRISTINE. Fritz, . . . won't you tell me?

FRITZ. Tell you what?

CHRISTINE. [*Very timidly.*] Who the lady was.

FRITZ. No; don't make me cross. [*More gently.*] You see, that's one thing we agreed upon expressly: No questions asked. That's the nice thing about it. When I am with you the world disappears, like that — [*Snaps his fingers.*] I don't ask you any questions, either.

CHRISTINE. You can ask me anything you like.

FRITZ. But I don't. I don't want to know anything.

TONI. [*Returns to table.*] Goodness, what a mess you're making! [*Takes the edibles, puts them on the plates.*] There. . . .

THEODORE. Say, Fritz, have you anything to drink here?

FRITZ. Oh, yes, I think I can find something. [*Exit into front room.*]

THEODORE. [*Raises himself and inspects the table.*] Good.

TONI. There, I think we've got everything now.

FRITZ. [*Returns with some bottles.*] Here's something to drink, too.

THEODORE. Where are the roses that fall from the ceiling?

TONI. That's right, we forgot the roses. [*She takes the roses out of the vase, climbs on a chair, and lets the roses fall on the table.*] There!

CHRISTINE. My, what a wild girl you are to-night!

THEODORE. Here, not on the plates.

FRITZ. Where do you want to sit, Christine?

THEODORE. Where is the cork-screw?

FRITZ. [Gets one from the sideboard.] Here is one.

TONI. [Tries to open a bottle.]

FRITZ. No, let me do that.

THEODORE. No, let me do it. . . . [Takes bottle and cork-screw from him.] Meanwhile you might—  
[Moves his fingers as at the piano.]

TONI. Yes, yes, that's grand! . . . [She runs to the piano, takes the things off it, and opens it.]

FRITZ. [To CHRISTINE.] Shall I?

CHRISTINE. Oh, please do, I've wanted that for so long.

FRITZ. [At the piano.] You can play a little too!

CHRISTINE. [With a gesture.] Oh goodness.

TONI. She plays fine, Christine does. . . . she can sing too.

FRITZ. Really? You never told me that.

CHRISTINE. Did you ever ask me?

FRITZ. Where did you learn to sing?

CHRISTINE. I really never learned. Father taught me a little—but I haven't got much voice. And you know, since auntie died, the one that always lived with us, it's even quieter at home than it was before.

FRITZ. What do you do, anyway, all day long?

CHRISTINE. Oh, I have plenty to do!

FRITZ. Around the house, I suppose?

CHRISTINE. Yes. And then I copy notes quite a lot.

THEODORE. Music notes?

CHRISTINE. Surely.

THEODORE. They must pay you tremendously for that. [The others laugh.] Well, I'd pay tremendously for it. Music copying must be a terrible task, I think.

TONI. There's no sense in her working so hard,

to the happy chance that, that . . . and so forth

• • •  
TONI. Yes, that's enough. [*They drink, Fritz taking Toni's arm, Theodore Christine's.*]

FRITZ. [*Kisses Toni.*]

THEODORE. [*Starts to kiss Christine.*]

CHRISTINE. Is that necessary?

THEODORE. Absolutely, else the whole ceremony is null. . . . [*Kisses her.*] There, and now to your seats! . . .

TONI. But it's getting terribly hot in the room.

FRITZ. That's because of all the candles Theodore lit.

TONI. And the wine, too. [*She leans back in her chair.*]

THEODORE. Come here, the best of all is coming now. [*He cuts off a slice of the cake and puts it in her mouth.*] There, sweet tooth,—that good?

TONI. Awfully! . . . [*He gives her another.*]

THEODORE. Come, Fritz, now's the time. Now you might play something.

FRITZ. Do you want me to, Christine?

CHRISTINE. Please do!

TONI. Play something swell.

THEODORE. [*Fills the glasses.*]

TONI. [*No more.*] Drinks.

CHRISTINE. [*Sipping.*] The wine is so heavy.

THEODORE. [*Pointing to the glass.*] Fritz.

FRITZ. [*Empties the glass, goes to piano.*]

CHRISTINE. [*Goes and sits by him.*]

TONI. Mr. Fritz, play the "Double Eagle."

FRITZ. The "Double Eagle"—how does it go?

TONI. Dore, can't you play it?

THEODORE. I can't play at all.

FRITZ. I know the thing; but I can't think of it.

*glass, then goes to TONI, to FRITZ, repeating the same ceremony and words; finally stands at his own place, and repeats as before. Seats himself.]*

TONI. [Laughing.] He's always doing something silly.

THEODORE. [Raises his glass; all clink.] Prosit.

TONI. Your health, Theodore.

THEODORE. [Rising.] Ladies and Gentlemen . . .

FRITZ. Oh, not yet!

THEODORE. [Sits again.] Well, I can wait.

TONI. Oh, that's what I like, after-dinner speeches. I have a cousin that always makes his speeches in rhymes.

THEODORE. What regiment is he in?

TONI. Come, stop that . . . He talks it off by heart and in rhyme, and it's just splendid, Christine. And he's an elderly gentleman now, too.

THEODORE. Oh, it sometimes happens that elderly gentlemen can still talk in rhyme.

FRITZ. But you're not drinking at all. Christine! [Clinks with her.]

THEODORE. [Clinks with TONI.] To the old gentlemen who talk in rhymes.

TONI. [Merrily.] To the young gentlemen, even if they don't talk at all . . . for example, to Mr. Fritz. . . . Say, Mr. Fritz, now we'll drink to our better acquaintance, if you wish—and Christine must do the same with Theodore.

THEODORE. But not with this wine, that's not the right kind for it. [Rises, takes another bottle, same ceremony as before.] *Xeres de la Frontera mille huit cent cinquante—*

TONI. [Sips.] Ah—

THEODORE. Can't you wait till we all drink together? Now then, children . . . Before we solemnly drink to our better acquaintance, let us drink

to the happy chance that, that . . . and so forth . . .

TONI. Yes, that's enough. [*They drink, Fritz taking Toni's arm, Theodore Christine's.*]

FRITZ. [*Kisses Toni.*]

THEODORE. [*Starts to kiss Christine.*]

CHRISTINE. Is that necessary?

THEODORE. Absolutely, else the whole ceremony is null. . . . [*Kisses her.*] There, and now to your seats! . . .

TONI. But it's getting terribly hot in the room.

FRITZ. That's because of all the candles Theodore lit.

TONI. And the wine, too. [*She leans back in her chair.*]

THEODORE. Come here, the best of all is coming now. [*He cuts off a slice of the cake and puts it in her mouth.*] There, sweet tooth,—that good?

TONI. Awfully! . . . [*He gives her another.*]

THEODORE. Come, Fritz, now's the time. Now you might play something.

FRITZ. Do you want me to, Christine?

CHRISTINE. Please do!

TONI. Play something swell.

THEODORE. [*Fills the glasses.*]

TONI. [*No more.*] Drinks.

CHRISTINE. [*Sipping.*] The wine is so heavy.

THEODORE. [*Pointing to the glass.*] Fritz.

FRITZ. [*Empties the glass, goes to piano.*]

CHRISTINE. [*Goes and sits by him.*]

TONI. Mr. Fritz, play the "Double Eagle."

FRITZ. The "Double Eagle"—how does it go?

TONI. Dore, can't you play it?

THEODORE. I can't play at all.

FRITZ. I know the thing; but I can't think of it.

TONI. I'll sing it for you. . . . La . . . la . . . lalalala. . . .

FRITZ. Aha, now I know. [Does not play quite correctly.]

TONI. [Goes to the piano.] No, this way. [Plays the melody with one finger.]

FRITZ. Yes, yes. . . . [He plays, TONI sings.]

THEODORE. Recollections again, hey?

FRITZ. [Plays wrong again and stops.] Can't do it. I've got no ear. [He starts to improvise.]

TONI. [After the first measure.] That's no good.

FRITZ. [Laughs.] Don't say that, I made it up.

TONI. But it's no good for dancing.

FRITZ. Just try it once . . .

THEODORE. [To TONI.] Come, let's try. [They dance.]

CHRISTINE. [Sits by the piano and looks at the keys.]

[There is a ring.]

FRITZ. [Suddenly stops playing; THEODORE and TONI dance on.]

THEODORE AND TONI. [Together.] What's all this? Come!

FRITZ. The bell just rang. . . . [To THEODORE.] Did you invite anybody else?

THEODORE. I should say not—you don't need to answer the bell.

CHRISTINE. [To FRITZ.] What's the matter with you?

FRITZ. Nothing . . .

[There is another ring.]

FRITZ. [Stands up, rooted to the spot.]

THEODORE. You are simply not at home.

FRITZ. You can hear the piano out in the cor-

ridor. . . . And you can see from the street that the room is lit.

THEODORE. What folly is this? You're simply not at home.

FRITZ. But it makes me nervous.

THEODORE. Well, what do you suppose it's going to be? A letter—or a telegram—You're not going to have a visitor at [Looks at his watch.] nine o'clock.

[*There is another ring.*]

FRITZ. Rubbish, I must go and see—[Exit.]

TONI. But you're not a bit swell—[Strikes a few keys on the piano.]

THEODORE. Here, stop that now!—[To CHRISTINE.] What ails you? Does the bell make you nervous too?

FRITZ. [*Returns, in forced calm.*]

THEODORE AND CHRISTINE. [Together.] Well, who was it?—Who was it?

FRITZ. [*With a forced smile.*] You must be good enough to excuse me for a moment. Go in there meanwhile.

THEODORE. What is it?

CHRISTINE. Who is it?

FRITZ. Nothing, child, I simply have to say a few words to a gentleman. . . .

[FRITZ has opened the door of the adjoining room, conducts the girls into it. THEODORE, going in last, looks questioningly at FRITZ.]

FRITZ. [*In a low voice, with an expression of horror.*] He!

THEODORE. Ah!

FRITZ. In with you!

THEODORE. I beg of you, don't do anything stupid, it may be a trap. . . .

FRITZ. Go . . . go. . . . [THEODORE exit. FRITZ

*goes rapidly through the room to the corridor, so that the stage is empty for a few seconds. Then he enters again, allowing an elegantly dressed gentleman of about thirty-five years to precede him. The gentleman wears a yellow mantle, holds his hat in his gloved hand. While entering.]* Pardon me for making you wait . . . I beg you. . . .

THE GENTLEMAN. [In a very easy tone.] Oh, that is nothing. I regret extremely to have disturbed you.

FRITZ. By no means. Will you not . . . [Indicates a chair.]

THE GENTLEMAN. Why, I see that I have disturbed you! A little entertainment, I presume?

FRITZ. A few friends.

THE GENTLEMAN. [Seating himself, amicable.] A masquerade, no doubt!

FRITZ. [Embarrassed.] Why do you say that?

THE GENTLEMAN. Well, your friends have ladies' hats and cloaks.

FRITZ. Well yes. . . . [Smiling.] There may be lady friends among them. . . . [Silence.]

THE GENTLEMAN. Life is at times very merry . . . yes . . . [Looks rigidly at FRITZ.]

FRITZ. [Endures the glance a while, then looks away.] I presume I may permit myself to inquire what gives me the pleasure of your visit?

THE GENTLEMAN. Certainly. . . . [Calmly.] You see, my wife forgot to take her veil away from here.

FRITZ. Your wife . . . here? Her . . . [Smiling.] The jest is a trifle strange. . . .

THE GENTLEMAN. [Suddenly rising, very loudly, almost wildly, supporting himself by resting one hand on the chair arm.] She did forget it.

FRITZ. [Rises also, and the two men stand facing each other.]

THE GENTLEMAN. [Raises his clenched fist, as if to launch it at FRITZ; in fury and loathing.] Oh! . . .

FRITZ. [Makes a parrying motion, takes a short step backward.]

THE GENTLEMAN. [After a long pause. Here are your letters. He throws on the desk a packet of letters which he has taken from his overcoat pocket.] I wish those which you have received.

FRITZ. [Parrying motion.]

THE GENTLEMAN. [Vehemently, significantly.] I do not wish to have them found—later—in your rooms.

FRITZ. [Very loudly.] They will not be found.

THE GENTLEMAN. [Looks at him. Pause.]

FRITZ. What else do you wish of me?

THE GENTLEMAN. [Scornfully.] What else?

FRITZ. I am at your disposal. . . .

THE GENTLEMAN. [Bows coolly.] Very well. [He casts a glance around the room; as he again sees the table and the girls' hats, a sudden flash crosses his face, as if he would burst into a new fit of rage.]

FRITZ. [Notices this.] I am wholly at your disposal.—I shall be at home to-morrow till noon.

THE GENTLEMAN. [Bows and turns to go.]

FRITZ. [Accompanies him to the door, the gentleman motioning him away. When he is gone, FRITZ goes to the desk and stands there a moment. Then he hastens to the window, looks through a crack in the blind, and can be seen to follow the motions of the gentleman passing along the street. Leaving the window he looks down for a moment; then goes to the door of the adjoining room, opens it halfway, and calls.] Theodore, one moment.

[The following scene very rapid.]

THEODORE. [Excited.] Well? . . .

FRITZ. He knows.

THEODORE. He knows nothing. You simply fell into his trap. I'll wager you even confessed. You're a fool, I tell you. . . . You . . .

FRITZ. [Pointing to the letters.] He brought me back my letters.

THEODORE. [Startled.] Oh! . . . [After a pause.] I always say, a man ought not to write letters.

FRITZ. It was he, this noon, down below.

THEODORE. Well, what happened?—Tell me about it.

FRITZ. You must do me a great service now, Theodore.

THEODORE. I'll fix up the whole business for you.

FRITZ. That is out of the question now.

THEODORE. Then . . .

FRITZ. In any case it will be well. . . . [Breaks off.]—but we can't let the poor girls wait so long.

THEODORE. Let them wait. What were you going to say?

FRITZ. It will be well if you go to Lensky to-day.

THEODORE. At once, if you wish.

FRITZ. You won't find him now . . . but between eleven and twelve he will surely come into the coffee-house . . . perhaps the two of you will then come here. . . .

THEODORE. Come, don't make up such a face . . . ninety-nine times out of a hundred it turns out all right. . . .

FRITZ. He will see to it that this one *doesn't* turn out all right.

THEODORE. But I beg you, remember that affair of last year, between Doctor Billinger and Herz—that was exactly the same.

FRITZ. None of that, you know yourself he ought to have shot me down right here in the room—it would have come to the same thing.

THEODORE. [Acting.] Well, that is fine, I must say. That's a grand idea. . . . And so Lensky and I count for nothing! You think we'll agree that . . .

FRITZ. I beg you, no more of that! . . . You will simply accept what is proposed.

THEODORE. Ah,—

FRITZ. What's the sense of all this, Theodore? As if you didn't know.

THEODORE. Nonsense. And anyway, it's all a matter of luck. . . . You have just as much chance of . . .

FRITZ. [Without listening to him.] She foreboded it. We both foreboded it. We knew it. . . .

THEODORE. Come, Fritz. . . .

FRITZ. [Goes to the desk, locks up the letters.] Oh, what is she doing this minute? Did he . . . Theodore, you must find out to-morrow what happened over there.

THEODORE. I will try.

FRITZ. And see to it that no useless delay . . .

THEODORE. It can scarcely be before day after to-morrow in the morning.

FRITZ. [Almost terrified.] Theodore!

THEODORE. And so . . . head up.—You believe a little in inward conviction, don't you—and I have a firm conviction that everything will turn out all right. [With forced merriment.] I don't know why myself, but I have the conviction, anyway!

FRITZ. [Smiling.] What a good fellow you are. But what shall we say to the girls?

THEODORE. That doesn't matter. Let's simply send them away.

FRITZ. No, no. Let's be as merry as we can. Christine must not suspect anything. I'll sit down at the piano again; and you call them in. [THEODORE

*turns to do this, with discontented face.]* And what shall you say to them?

THEODORE. That it's none of their business.

FRITZ. [Who has sat down at the piano, turning toward him.] No, no—

THEODORE. That it's about a friend—I'll invent something.

FRITZ. [Plays a few notes.]

THEODORE. Ladies, I beg you to enter. [Has opened the door.]

TONI. Well, at last! Has he gone?

CHRISTINE. [Hastening to FRITZ.] Who was here, Fritz?

FRITZ. [At the piano, playing.] Curious again.

CHRISTINE. I beg you, Fritz, tell me.

FRITZ. Sweetheart, I can't tell you, it really concerns people that you don't know at all.

CHRISTINE. [Coaxingly.] Come, Fritz, tell me the truth.

THEODORE. Of course she won't leave you in peace. . . . But mind you tell her nothing! You promised him.

TONI. Come, don't be so tiresome, Christine, let them have their fun. They're simply putting on airs.

THEODORE. I must finish that waltz with Miss Toni. [German accent.] Bleaze, Mister Music-maker—a liddle museek.

FRITZ. [Plays.]

[THEODORE AND TONI dance a few measures.]

TONI. [After a few moments.] I can't. [She falls back into a chair.]

THEODORE. [Kisses her, seats himself beside her on the chair-arm.]

FRITZ. [Stays at the piano, takes both CHRISTINE'S hands, looks at her.]

CHRISTINE. [As if awaking.] Why don't you play on?

FRITZ. [Smiling.] Enough for to-day. . . .

CHRISTINE. That's the way I'd like to be able to play.

FRITZ. Do you play much?

CHRISTINE. I don't get much chance; there's always something in the house that needs to be done. And then you know we have such a poor piano.

FRITZ. I'd like to try it once. I'd like to see your room once, anyway.

CHRISTINE. [Smiling.] It isn't as pretty as here.

FRITZ. And something else I'd like: to have you tell me about yourself . . . a whole lot . . . I really know so little about you.

CHRISTINE. There isn't much to tell.—And I haven't any secrets either . . . like some others.

FRITZ. You never loved any man before?

CHRISTINE. [Merely looks at him.]

FRITZ. [Kisses her hands.]

CHRISTINE. And never shall love any other.

FRITZ. [With an almost pained expression.] Don't say that . . . don't. . . . What do you know about it? . . . Does your father love you very much, Christine?

CHRISTINE. Oh, how much! . . . And there was a time when I used to tell him everything.

FRITZ. Well, child, don't reproach yourself. People have to have secrets once in a while—that's the way of the world.

CHRISTINE. If I only knew that you loved me—it would all be right.

FRITZ. Then don't you know?

CHRISTINE. If you would always talk to me like that, then . . .

FRITZ. Christine! You haven't a very comfortable seat, though.

CHRISTINE. Let me be—this is all right. [She lays her head against the piano.]

FRITZ. [Stands up and strokes her hair.]

CHRISTINE. Oh, that feels good.

[The room is quiet.]

THEODORE. Where are the cigars, Fritz?

FRITZ. [Advances to him as he stands by the side-board looking.]

TONI. [Has fallen asleep.]

FRITZ. [Hands him a small box of cigars.] And black coffee. [He pours two cups.]

THEODORE. Children, don't you want some coffee, too?

FRITZ. Toni, shall I pour a cup? . . .

THEODORE. Let them sleep.—You ought not to drink coffee to-day. You ought to go to bed as soon as possible and try to sleep well.

FRITZ. [Looks at him and laughs bitterly.]

THEODORE. Well, things are as they are . . . and now it's not a question of being magnificent or deep, but of being as sensible as you can . . . that's the point . . . in such cases.

FRITZ. You'll bring Lensky to me to-night, will you?

THEODORE. That's nonsense. To-morrow is time enough.

FRITZ. I beg you, bring him.

THEODORE. All right, then.

FRITZ. Will you take the girls home?

THEODORE. Yes, and right away, too.—Toni! . . . Get up!

TONI. Oh, you're drinking black coffee. Give me some, too.

THEODORE. Here you are, child.

FRITZ. [To CHRISTINE, going to her.] Tired, my sweetheart?

CHRISTINE. How sweet, when you talk that way.

FRITZ. Very tired?

CHRISTINE. [Smiling.] It's the wine.—And I have a little headache, too.

FRITZ. Well, that will pass off in the open air.

CHRISTINE. Are we going now? Will you go with us?

FRITZ. No, child. I'm going to stay right here. I have some things to do.

CHRISTINE. [Recollecting.] Now . . . What have you got to do now?

FRITZ. [Almost sternly.] Christine, that's something you must stop.—[Gently.] You see, I'm all used up . . . we walked around in the country for two hours to-day, Theodore and I.

THEODORE. Oh, that was delightful. One of these days we'll all drive out into the country together.

TONI. Yes, that will be swell. And you'll put on your uniform.

THEODORE. There's feeling for nature!

CHRISTINE. When shall I see you again?

FRITZ. [Somewhat nervously.] I'll write you.

CHRISTINE. [Sadly.] Good-bye. [Turns to go.]

FRITZ. [Notices her sadness.] To-morrow, Christine.

CHRISTINE. [Happily.] Truly?

FRITZ. In the public gardens out there—at—say at six o'clock. . . . Will that suit you?

CHRISTINE. [Nods.]

TONI. [To FRITZ.] Are you going with us, Fritz?

FRITZ. No, I shall stay here.

TONI. He has an easy time of it. Think of the long journey home we have.

FRITZ. But Toni, you have left almost the whole

## SECOND ACT

[CHRISTINE's room. *Modest and neat.*]

CHRISTINE. [Is dressing to go out.]

CATHERINE. [Enters after knocking.] Good evening, Miss Christine.

CHRISTINE. [Standing before the mirror, turns around.] Good evening.

CATHERINE. You're just going out?

CHRISTINE. I'm not in such a great hurry.

CATHERINE. My husband sent me to ask if you wouldn't go and take supper with us in the Zoölogical Garden; there's a band there to-night.

CHRISTINE. Thank you very much, Mrs. Binder. I can't to-night. Another time, perhaps?—But you're not angry?

CATHERINE. Not a bit, why should I be? You'll probably have a better time than with us.

CHRISTINE. [Looks at her.]

CATHERINE. Has your father gone to the theatre?

CHRISTINE. Oh, no; he comes home first. It doesn't begin till half past seven now.

CATHERINE. That's so, I keep forgetting. I'll just wait for him. I've wanted for a long time to ask him about free tickets to the new piece. I suppose they can be had now?

CHRISTINE. Surely, nobody goes there any more now, when the evenings are so lovely.

CATHERINE. People like us never get a chance to go, unless we happen to know somebody in a theatre.—But don't let me keep you, Miss Christine, if you have to go. To be sure, my husband will be very sorry . . . and somebody else too.

CHRISTINE. Who?

CATHERINE. Binder's cousin goes with us, of

TONI. [*In high spirits.*] Good night, my darling child.

THEODORE. [*Reprovingly.*] Toni!  
[One can hear his words, her laughter; the steps die away. THEODORE whistles the melody of the "Double Eagle," which is the last thing heard. FRITZ looks out a few moments longer, then sinks down on the chair nearest the window.]

CURTAIN.

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CHRISTINE. Who?

CATHERINE. Binder's cousin goes with us, of

course. Do you know, Miss Christine, that he has a steady job now?

CHRISTINE. [Indifferently.] Oh.

CATHERINE. And a very nice salary. And such a fine young fellow. And he has such respect for you—

CHRISTINE. Well—good-bye, Mrs. Binder.

CATHERINE. A body could tell him anything about you—he wouldn't believe a word of it. . . .

CHRISTINE. [Looks at her.]

CATHERINE. There are such men.

CHRISTINE. Good-bye, Mrs. Binder.

CATHERINE. Good-bye. . . . [Not too maliciously.]

See that you aren't late to your appointment, Miss Christine.

CHRISTINE. What do you want of me, anyway?

CATHERINE. Why, nothing; you're quite right. You can't be young but once.

CHRISTINE. Good-bye.

CATHERINE. But I'd like to give you one piece of advice, just the same, Miss Christine: you ought to be a little more careful.

CHRISTINE. Why, what do you mean?

CATHERINE. Look,—Vienna is such a big city. . . . Do you have to have your meetings a hundred paces from your house?

CHRISTINE. I suppose that's nobody's business.

CATHERINE. I didn't want to believe it, when Binder told me. He saw you, you know. . . . Come, I said to him, you were mistaken, you saw somebody else. Miss Christine is not the girl to go walking with elegant young gentlemen in the evening, and if she did, she would be wise enough not to go walking through these streets. Well, says he, you can ask her yourself. And, says he, it's no wonder, either—she doesn't come to see us any more at all. Instead

of that she's going around all the time with Toni Schlager, and what sort of company is that for a decent young girl?—You see, men are so low-minded, Miss Christine.—And of course he had to go and tell everything to Franz right away too; but he got fine and angry, he did, and for Miss Christine he'd burn his hand off, and anybody that said anything about her would have to deal with him. And you're so domestic and were always so sweet with your old auntie—God grant her eternal rest—and you live so modestly and so retiringly and all that. . . . [Pause.] Perhaps you'll come to hear the music, after all?

CHRISTINE. No. . . .

VYRING. [Enters, a laurel branch in his hand.] Good evening.—Ah, Mrs. Binder. How are you?

CATHERINE. Thank you, well.

VYRING. And little Lena? And your husband?

CATHERINE. All well, God be praised.

VYRING. Well, that's fine. [To CHRISTINE.] You're still at home in all this fine weather?

CHRISTINE. I was just going out.

VYRING. That's right. The air outside,—it's something wonderful, eh, Mrs. Binder? I just came through the public gardens; the lilacs are in bloom, simply gorgeous. I broke the law a little, too. [Gives the branch to CHRISTINE.]

CHRISTINE. Thank you, father.

CATHERINE. Thank your lucky stars that the guard didn't catch you.

VYRING. Just go out there once, Mrs. Binder. It smells just as good as if I hadn't plucked the little twig.

CATHERINE. But if everybody thought the same.

VYRING. Well, that would be a mistake, to be sure.

CHRISTINE. Good-bye, father.

VYRING. If you could wait a few minutes, you might go to the theatre with me.

CHESTERINE. I . . . I promised Toni that I would go for her. . . .

VYRING. Oh, yes. Well, that's wiser, too. Youth belongs with youth. Good-bye, Christine.

CHESTERINE. [Kisses him.] Good-bye, Mrs. Binder. [Exit. VYRING's eyes follow her tenderly.]

CATHERINE. That's a very close friendship with her and Miss Toni.

VYRING. Yes.—I'm really glad that she has some company and doesn't have to sit at home all the time. What sort of a life does that girl have, anyway?

CATHERINE. Yes, to be sure.

VYRING. I can't tell you, Mrs. Binder, how it hurts me sometimes when I come home from rehearsal and find her sitting there and sewing; and then we've scarcely got up from the table at noon when she sits down again and goes to copying notes.

CATHERINE. Yes, yes, the millionaires have an easier time of it, to be sure, than we do. But how about her singing?

VYRING. It's not much. Her voice is big enough for a room, and her singing is good enough for her father—but you can't live on that.

CATHERINE. That's too bad.

VYRING. I am glad she sees it herself. She at least will be spared from disappointments. Of course I could get her into the chorus in our theatre.

CATHERINE. Of course, with such a figure!

VYRING. But there's no future there.

CATHERINE. A girl brings really a good many cares. When I think that in five or six years my little Dena will be a grown girl too—

VYRING. But why don't you sit down, Mrs. Binder?

CATHERINE. Oh, thanks; my husband is coming for me right away—I only came to invite Christine.

VYRING. Invite? . . .

CATHERINE. Yes, to hear the band in the Zoölogical Gardens. I thought that might cheer her up a bit. She really needs it.

VYRING. Couldn't do her a bit of harm, especially after this sad winter. Why doesn't she go with you?

CATHERINE. I don't know. . . . Perhaps because Binder's cousin is with us.

VYRING. Ah, that's possible. You know she can't stand him. She told me that herself.

CATHERINE. Well, why not? Franz is a very decent fellow—and now he's even got a steady job, and that's a piece of good fortune nowadays for a . . .

VYRING. For a . . . poor girl—

CATHERINE. For any girl.

VYRING. Now, tell me, Mrs. Binder, is a blooming young creature like that really made for nothing but for some such decent fellow who happens to have a steady job?

CATHERINE. Why, that's the best thing, after all. You can't wait for a count, and when one happens to come along, he usually takes his leave before he's married you. [VYRING is at the window. Pause.] Well, and that's why I always say you can't be careful enough of a young girl, especially of the company she keeps—

VYRING. Well, I wonder if it's worth while to throw away all your young years like that.—And what good does all her goodness do a poor creature

like that, even if, after years of waiting, the stocking-maker actually comes?

CATHERINE. Mr. Vyring, if my husband is a stocking-maker, he is an honest and good man, that I've never had to complain of. . . .

VYRING. [Soothingly.] Why, Mrs. Binder, do you think I'm aiming at you? . . . You didn't fling your youth out of the window, either.

CATHERINE. I have forgotten all about that.

VYRING. Don't say that.—You can say what you like, memories are, after all, the best thing in your life.

CATHERINE. I haven't any memories.

VYRING. Now, now. . . .

CATHERINE. And if a body does have such memories as you mean, what remains behind? . . . Regret.

VYRING. Well, and what remains behind—if she—doesn't even have anything to remember? If her whole life simply goes by [*Simply and without emotion.*], day after day, without happiness or love—I suppose you think that's better?

CATHERINE. But, Mr. Vyring, just think of the old lady, of your sister. . . . But it still pains you to have her spoken of, Mr. Vyring.

VYRING. It still pains me, yes.

CATHERINE. Of course . . . when two people have clung to each other so warmly. . . . I always said that brothers like you aren't found every day.

VYRING. [Makes gesture of deprecation.]

CATHERINE. Well, it's true. You had to be both father and mother to her, and you such a young man.

VYRING. Yes, yes—

CATHERINE. And that must be a kind of consolation, too. Then you know that you have been the

benefactor and the protector of a poor girl like that—

VYRING. Yes, I imagined that, too—when she was still a pretty young girl—and God knows how clever and noble I thought myself. But then, later on, when the gray hairs came and the wrinkles, and one day passed like all the others—and her whole youth—and the girl gradually (you scarcely notice such things) turned into the old maid—then for the first time I began to see what I had done.

CATHERINE. But Mr. Vyring—

VYRING. I still see her before me, as she often used to sit opposite me in the evening, sitting by the lamp here in the room, and used to look at me with her quiet smile, with a certain resigned expression,—as if she wanted to thank me for something; —and I—I could have gladly gone down on my knees to her, and begged her forgiveness that I had guarded her so well against all dangers—and all happiness! [Pause.]

CATHERINE. And many a girl would be happy just the same, if she always had such a brother by her side . . . and nothing to regret. . . .

TONI. [Enters.] Good evening. . . . Why, it's all dark here, you can scarcely see a thing.—Ah, Mrs. Binder. Your husband is down-stairs waiting for you, Mrs. Binder. . . . Isn't Christine at home?

VYRING. She went out a quarter of an hour ago.

CATHERINE. Didn't you meet her? She was going to meet you.

TONI. No . . . we evidently missed each other.— You're going to hear the band to-night, your husband says.

CATHERINE. Yes, he is so fond of it. What a charming little hat you have on, Miss Toni. Isn't it a new one?

TONI. I should say not.—Don't you know this style any more? Last spring's style, only freshly trimmed.

CATHERINE. Did you trim it yourself?

TONI. Well, of course.

VYRING. So clever!

CATHERINE. Oh, yes—I keep forgetting that you worked for a year in a milliner shop.

TONI. I shall probably go back again. Mother wants me to, and that settles it.

CATHERINE. How is your mother?

TONI. Well enough—she has a little tooth-ache—but the doctor says it's rheumatic pains.

VYRING. Well, it's time for me . . .

CATHERINE. I'll go right down with you, Mr. Vyring.

TONI. I'll go, too. But take your overcoat, Mr. Vyring; it's going to be quite cool later on.

VYRING. You think so?

CATHERINE. Yes, indeed.—How can you be so foolish?

CHRISTINE. [Enters.]

TONI. Why, there she is.

CATHERINE. Back from your walk already?

CHRISTINE. Yes. Hello, Toni.—I have a headache. [Seats herself.]

VYRING. Headache?

CATHERINE. That's from the air.

VYRING. Come, what's the matter, Christine?—Please, Miss Toni, will you light the lamp?

TONI. [Sets about it.]

CHRISTINE. But I can do that myself.

VYRING. Let me see your face, Christine.

CHRISTINE. But, father, it is nothing; it's just the air outside.

CATHERINE. Lots of people can't stand the spring air.

VYRING. Miss Toni, you'll stay with Christine, won't you?

TONI. Of course I will.

CHRISTINE. But it isn't anything, father.

TONI. My mother doesn't make such a fuss over me, when I have a headache.

VYRING. [To CHRISTINE, still sitting.] Are you so tired?

CHRISTINE. [Standing up.] I'll get right up again. [Smiling.]

VYRING. There—now you look quite different again. [To CATHERINE.] She looks quite different when she smiles, don't you think? Well, good-bye, Christine. [Kisses her.] And see to it that your little head isn't aching when I come home. [He is at the door.]

CATHERINE. [Softly to CHRISTINE.] Have you quarreled?

CHRISTINE. [Makes an angry gesture.]

VYRING. [At the door.] Mrs. Binder!

TONI. Good-bye.

[*Exeunt VYRING and CATHERINE.*]

TONI. Do you know what your headache comes from? From the sweet wine yesterday. I'm surprised that I don't feel the effects of it. But it was jolly, wasn't it?

CHRISTINE. [Nods.]

TONI. They're swell people, aren't they?—both of them, you can't say anything different, can you?—And such nice rooms as Fritz has, really splendid. At Dore's place . . . [Interrupts herself.] Oh, well.—Say, have you still got such a headache? Why don't you talk? . . . What's the matter with you?

CHRISTINE. Only think,—he didn't come.

TONI. Left you in the lurch, did he? Serves you right.

CHRISTINE. Why, what do you mean? What have I done?

TONI. You spoil him, that's all; you're too nice to him. A man just can't help getting tyrannical.

CHRISTINE. You don't know what you're talking about.

TONI. I do know quite well.—I've been angry with you this long time. He comes late to his appointments; he doesn't take you home; he goes into a theatre-box with strangers; he leaves you in the lurch—and you take it all calmly and make sheep's eyes [*Imitating.*] at him into the bargain.

CHRISTINE. Oh, don't talk so, don't make yourself out worse than you are. You love Theodore too.

TONI. Love him—of course I love him. But he won't find me grieving about him, and no man will, not any more. There isn't one of these men that is worth it.

CHRISTINE. I never heard you talk so, never!

TONI. No, Tina—we never talked like this before. I never dared, you see. You don't know how afraid of you I was! . . . But I always thought this: when you once get it, you'll get it bad. And the first time it certainly does give you a shaking up.—But you can be thankful that you've got such a good friend to help you through your first love affair.

CHRISTINE. Toni!

TONI. Don't you believe me when I say I'm a good friend to you? If I wasn't here to tell you that he's just a man like the rest, and that the whole man-pack isn't worth a single bad hour, God knows what thoughts might come into your head. But I always will say, you never can believe a word men say.

CHRISTINE. What do you mean by saying *men*, *men*—what do I care about *men!*—I'm not asking about the others.—As long as I live I shall never think about another man.

TONI. Well, what are you thinking of? . . . has he? . . . Of course—such things have happened; but then you ought to have gone at the affair differently.

CHRISTINE. Do keep still!

TONI. Well, what do you want? I can't help it if it's so.—You have to think about a thing like that. You simply have to wait till somebody comes that you can see is in earnest from his face. . . .

CHRISTINE. Toni, I can't stand such words to-day; they hurt me.

TONI. [Good-humoredly.] Oh, now, come—

CHRISTINE. Leave me alone . . . don't be angry . . . leave me alone!

TONI. Why should I be angry? I'll go. I didn't want to hurt you, Christine, truly not. [Turns to go.] Ah, Mr. Fritz.

FRITZ. [Has entered.] Good evening.

CHRISTINE. [With a joyous cry.] Fritz! Fritz! [Rushes into his arms.]

TONI. [Steals out, her face saying: *I'm not needed here.*]

FRITZ. [Freeing himself.] But—

CHRISTINE. They all say you will forsake me! But you won't, will you—not yet—not just yet?

FRITZ. Who says it? What ails you? [Pattting her.] But, sweetheart, . . . I really thought you would be startled when I suddenly came walking in here.

CHRISTINE. Oh—so long as I have you!

FRITZ. Come, calm yourself—did you wait long for me?

CHRISTINE. Why didn't you come?

FRITZ. I was detained and that made me late. Just now I was in the gardens and didn't find you—and was going home again. Suddenly I had such a longing, such a longing for your dear little face . . .

CHRISTINE. [Happily.] Oh, truly?

FRITZ. And then, too, I had such an indescribable desire to see where you live—yes, really—I just had to see it once. And so I couldn't stand it and came up here . . . and so you really don't mind?

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CHRISTINE. What do I care about people!

FRITZ. So this is—[Looks around the room.]—this is your room? Very pretty.

CHRISTINE. You can't see anything. [Is about to take the shade off the lamp.]

FRITZ. No, don't do that, the light blinds me, it's better this way. So that's the window you've told me about, where you always sit and work, eh?—And the pretty view! [Smiling.] But just look at all the roofs you see.—And over there—what's that black thing I see over yonder?

CHRISTINE. That's Bald Mountain.

FRITZ. Sure enough. You really have a better view than I.

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FRITZ. Do any teams go past?

CHRISTINE. Not often, but there's a locksmith in the house opposite.

FRITZ. Oh, that's very unpleasant. [He has sat down.]

CHRISTINE. You get used to it; you don't hear it any more.

FRITZ. [Rises again hastily.] Is this really my first visit? Everything seems so familiar to me. . . . I have imagined everything just this way. [He starts to look around the room.]

CHRISTINE. No, you mustn't look at anything.

FRITZ. What are those pictures?

CHRISTINE. Oh, stop!

FRITZ. Ah, I want to look at them. [He takes the lamp and lights the pictures.]

CHRISTINE. "Parting and Return."

FRITZ. Sure enough—"Parting and Return."

CHRISTINE. I know well enough that the pictures aren't pretty.—There is a much better one in father's room.

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CHRISTINE. It is a girl looking out of the window, and outside it's winter, you know—and it's name is "Forsaken."

FRITZ. Oh.—[Puts down the lamp.] Ah, and that's your library. [Sits down beside the little book-rack.]

CHRISTINE. You'd better not look at them.

FRITZ. Why not? Ah! Schiller . . . Hauff . . . Pocket Encyclopedia . . . Goodness gracious!

CHRISTINE. It only goes to G.

FRITZ. [Smiling.] Oh. . . . A book for old and young. . . . You look at the pictures in it, I suppose?

CHRISTINE. Of course I've looked at the pictures.

FRITZ. [Still seated.] Who is the gentleman there on the stove?

CHRISTINE. Why, don't you know? That's Schubert.

FRITZ. [Rising.] Sure enough.

CHRISTINE. Because father likes him so much. Father used to compose songs himself, very beautiful ones.

FRITZ. And now he doesn't?

CHRISTINE. Not any more. [Pause.]

FRITZ. [Sits down.] How cosy it is here.

CHRISTINE. Do you really like it?

FRITZ. Very much. . . . What is that? [Takes up a vase of artificial flowers standing on the table.]

CHRISTINE. He's found something else!

FRITZ. No, child, that doesn't belong in here. . . . It looks so dusty.

CHRISTINE. But they certainly aren't dusty.

FRITZ. Artificial flowers always look dusty. . . . Real flowers ought to be in your room, flowers that are fresh and sweet-smelling. From now on I shall . . . [Breaks off, turns to conceal his emotion.]

CHRISTINE. What! What were you going to say?

FRITZ. Nothing, nothing.

CHRISTINE. [Rises. Tenderly.] What was it?

FRITZ. I was going to say that I would send you fresh flowers to-morrow.

CHRISTINE. Well, and did you want to take it back so soon?—Of course! To-morrow you won't be thinking of me any more.

FRITZ. [Deprecatory gesture.]

CHRISTINE. Certainly, it's out of sight, out of mind, with you.

FRITZ. What are you saying?

CHRISTINE. Oh, yes, I know. I can tell.

FRITZ. How can you imagine such a thing?

CHRISTINE. You are to blame yourself. Because

you're always keeping secrets from me. . . . Because you never tell me about yourself.—What do you do all day?

FRITZ. Why, sweetheart, that's very simple. I go to lectures—sometimes—then I go into the coffee-house . . . then I read . . . or sometimes I play the piano—then I chat with somebody—then I go calling . . . but all that is of no account. It's tiresome to talk about it.—But now I must go, child.

CHRISTINE. So soon—

FRITZ. Your father will soon be here.

CHRISTINE. Not for a long time yet, Fritz.—Stay awhile—just a minute—stay awhile—

FRITZ. And then I have . . . Theodore is expecting me. . . . I have something to talk over with him.

CHRISTINE. To-day?

FRITZ. Surely to-day.

CHRISTINE. You can see him to-morrow, too.

FRITZ. Perhaps I shan't be in Vienna to-morrow.

CHRISTINE. Not in Vienna?

FRITZ. [Noticing her alarm, calmly, cheerfully.] Well, that wouldn't be anything wonderful, would it? I'm going away for a day—or perhaps for two, you child, you.

CHRISTINE. Where to?

FRITZ. Where? . . . Anywhere.—Good heavens, don't make up such a face. . . . I'm going out to my father's estate. . . . Well, is that so terrible to you?

CHRISTINE. And you never tell me about him, either.

FRITZ. No; what a child you are. . . . You don't understand how nice it is to be all alone together. Tell me, don't you feel that?

CHRISTINE. No, it isn't nice at all that you never tell me anything about yourself. . . . You see, I'm interested in everything that touches you, . . . yes, everything.—I'd like to have more of you than just the one hour in the evening that we can spend together sometimes. Then you are gone again, and I don't know anything. . . . Then the whole night goes and a whole day, with so many hours in it—and still I don't know anything. And that often makes me so sad.

FRITZ. Why does that make you sad?

CHRISTINE. Why, because I have such a longing for you as if you weren't in the same city at all, as if you were somewhere else. You simply disappear, as far as I am concerned, so far away. . . .

FRITZ. [Somewhat impatient.] But—

CHRISTINE. Well, it's true!

FRITZ. Come here to me. [She does so.] After all, the only thing you know is that I—that you love me at this moment. . . . [She wishes to speak.] Don't talk about eternity. [More to himself.] Perhaps there are moments that scatter around them the aroma of eternity.—That is the only one that we can understand, the only one that belongs to us. [He kisses her. Pause. He rises. With a sudden outburst.] Oh, how beautiful it is here, how beautiful! [He stands at the window.] So far from the world you are in here, among all the many houses. . . . I seem to be so alone here, just with you. . . . [Softly.] So sheltered. . . .

CHRISTINE. If you always talked like that . . . I could almost believe . . .

FRITZ. Believe what, child?

CHRISTINE. That you love me as I dreamed it—the day you kissed me the first time, . . . do you remember?

FRITZ. [Passionately.] I do love you!—[He embraces her; tears himself from her.] But now let me go.

CHRISTINE. Are you sorry you said it, so soon again? You are free, you know you are free—you can go and leave me whenever you like . . . you haven't promised me anything—and I haven't demanded anything of you. . . . It doesn't matter what becomes of me, then: I've been happy for once, and that's all I ask of life. I only want you to know that and to believe that I never—loved any man before you, and that I never shall love any man—when you get tired of me—

FRITZ. [More to himself.] Don't say it, don't say it—it sounds—so sweet.

[There is a knock.]

FRITZ. [Starts.] That's probably Theodore.

CHRISTINE. [Startled.] He knows that you are here!

THEODORE. [Enters.] Good evening.—Impudent of me, eh?

CHRISTINE. Do you have such important matters to discuss with him?

THEODORE. I certainly have; and have been looking everywhere for him.

FRITZ. [In a low voice.] Why didn't you wait below?

CHRISTINE. What are you whispering to him?

THEODORE. [Wishing her to hear.] Why I didn't wait below. . . . Well, if I had absolutely known that you were here. . . . But I couldn't risk walking up and down outside for two hours.

FRITZ. [Pointedly.] Then . . . you will go with me to-morrow?

THEODORE. [Comprehending.] Surely.

FRITZ. That's right.

CHRISTINE. Only think,—he didn't come.

TONI. Left you in the lurch, did he? Serves you right.

CHRISTINE. Why, what do you mean? What have I done?

TONI. You spoil him, that's all; you're too nice to him. A man just can't help getting tyrannical.

CHRISTINE. You don't know what you're talking about.

TONI. I do know quite well.—I've been angry with you this long time. He comes late to his appointments; he doesn't take you home; he goes into a theatre-box with strangers; he leaves you in the lurch—and you take it all calmly and make sheep's eyes [*Imitating.*] at him into the bargain.

CHRISTINE. Oh, don't talk so, don't make yourself out worse than you are. You love Theodore too.

TONI. Love him—of course I love him. But he won't find me grieving about him, and no man will, not any more. There isn't one of these men that is worth it.

CHRISTINE. I never heard you talk so, never!

TONI. No, Tina—we never talked like this before. I never dared, you see. You don't know how afraid of you I was! . . . But I always thought this: when you once get it, you'll get it bad. And the first time it certainly does give you a shaking up.—But you can be thankful that you've got such a good friend to help you through your first love affair.

CHRISTINE. Toni!

TONI. Don't you believe me when I say I'm a good friend to you? If I wasn't here to tell you that he's just a man like the rest, and that the whole man-pack isn't worth a single bad hour, God knows what thoughts might come into your head. But I always will say, you never can believe a word men say.

CHRISTINE. What do you mean by saying *men*, *men*—what do I care about *men*!—I'm not asking about the others.—As long as I live I shall never think about another man.

TONI. Well, what are you thinking of? . . . has he? . . . Of course—such things have happened; but then you ought to have gone at the affair differently.

CHRISTINE. Do keep still!

TONI. Well, what do you want? I can't help it if it's so.—You have to think about a thing like that. You simply have to wait till somebody comes that you can see is in earnest from his face. . . .

CHRISTINE. Toni, I can't stand such words to-day; they hurt me.

TONI. [Good-humoredly.] Oh, now, come—

CHRISTINE. Leave me alone . . . don't be angry . . . leave me alone!

TONI. Why should I be angry? I'll go. I didn't want to hurt you, Christine, truly not. [Turns to go.] Ah, Mr. Fritz.

FRITZ. [Has entered.] Good evening.

CHRISTINE. [With a joyous cry.] Fritz! Fritz! [Rushes into his arms.]

TONI. [Steals out, her face saying: *I'm not needed here.*]

FRITZ. [Freeing himself.] But—

CHRISTINE. They all say you will forsake me! But you won't, will you—not yet—not just yet?

FRITZ. Who says it? What ails you? [Patting her.] But, sweetheart, . . . I really thought you would be startled when I suddenly came walking in here.

CHRISTINE. Oh—so long as I have you!

FRITZ. Come, calm yourself—did you wait long for me?

CHRISTINE. Why didn't you come?

FRITZ. I was detained and that made me late. Just now I was in the gardens and didn't find you—and was going home again. Suddenly I had such a longing, such a longing for your dear little face . . .

CHRISTINE. [Happily.] Oh, truly?

FRITZ. And then, too, I had such an indescribable desire to see where you live—yes, really—I just had to see it once. And so I couldn't stand it and came up here . . . and so you really don't mind?

CHRISTINE. Oh, the idea!

FRITZ. Nobody saw me; and I knew your father was in the theatre.

CHRISTINE. What do I care about people!

FRITZ. So this is—[*Looks around the room.*]—this is your room? Very pretty.

CHRISTINE. You can't see anything. [*Is about to take the shade off the lamp.*]

FRITZ. No, don't do that, the light blinds me, it's better this way. So that's the window you've told me about, where you always sit and work, eh?—And the pretty view! [Smiling.] But just look at all the roofs you see.—And over there—what's that black thing I see over yonder?

CHRISTINE. That's Bald Mountain.

FRITZ. Sure enough. You really have a better view than I.

CHRISTINE. Oh!

FRITZ. I'd like to live up so high, and be able to overlook all the roofs; I think that is very nice. And I suppose the alley is quiet?

CHRISTINE. Oh, in the daytime there's noise enough.

FRITZ. Do any teams go past?

CHRISTINE. Not often, but there's a locksmith in the house opposite.

FRITZ. Oh, that's very unpleasant. [*He has sat down.*]

CHRISTINE. You get used to it; you don't hear it any more.

FRITZ. [*Rises again hastily.*] Is this really my first visit? Everything seems so familiar to me. . . . I have imagined everything just this way. [*He starts to look around the room.*]

CHRISTINE. No, you mustn't look at anything.

FRITZ. What are those pictures?

CHRISTINE. Oh, stop!

FRITZ. Ah, I want to look at them. [*He takes the lamp and lights the pictures.*]

CHRISTINE. "Parting and Return."

FRITZ. Sure enough—"Parting and Return."

CHRISTINE. I know well enough that the pictures aren't pretty.—There is a much better one in father's room.

FRITZ. What picture is it?

CHRISTINE. It is a girl looking out of the window, and outside it's winter, you know—and it's name is "Forsaken."

FRITZ. Oh.—[*Puts down the lamp.*] Ah, and that's your library. [*Sits down beside the little book-rack.*]

CHRISTINE. You'd better not look at them.

FRITZ. Why not? Ah! Schiller . . . Hauff . . . Pocket Encyclopedia . . . Goodness gracious!

CHRISTINE. It only goes to G.

FRITZ. [*Smiling.*] Oh. . . . A book for old and young. . . . You look at the pictures in it, I suppose?

CHRISTINE. Of course I've looked at the pictures.

FRITZ. [*Still seated.*] Who is the gentleman there on the stove?

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FRITZ. And now he doesn't?

CHRISTINE. Not any more. [Pause.]

FRITZ. [Sits down.] How cosy it is here.

CHRISTINE. Do you really like it?

FRITZ. Very much. . . . What is that? [Takes up a vase of artificial flowers standing on the table.]

CHRISTINE. He's found something else!

FRITZ. No, child, that doesn't belong in here. . . . It looks so dusty.

CHRISTINE. But they certainly aren't dusty.

FRITZ. Artificial flowers always look dusty. . . . Real flowers ought to be in your room, flowers that are fresh and sweet-smelling. From now on I shall . . . [Breaks off, turns to conceal his emotion.]

CHRISTINE. What? What were you going to say?

FRITZ. Nothing, nothing.

CHRISTINE. [Rises. Tenderly.] What was it?

FRITZ. I was going to say that I would send you fresh flowers to-morrow.

CHRISTINE. Well, and did you want to take it back so soon!—Of course! To-morrow you won't be thinking of me any more.

FRITZ. [Deprecatory gesture.]

CHRISTINE. Certainly, it's out of sight, out of mind, with you.

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CHRISTINE. Oh, yes, I know. I can tell.

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you're always keeping secrets from me. . . . Because you never tell me about yourself.—What do you do all day?

FRITZ. Why, sweetheart, that's very simple. I go to lectures—sometimes—then I go into the coffee-house . . . then I read . . . or sometimes I play the piano—then I chat with somebody—then I go calling . . . but all that is of no account. It's tiresome to talk about it.—But now I must go, child.

CHRISTINE. So soon—

FRITZ. Your father will soon be here.

CHRISTINE. Not for a long time yet, Fritz.—Stay awhile—just a minute—stay awhile—

FRITZ. And then I have . . . Theodore is expecting me. . . . I have something to talk over with him.

CHRISTINE. To-day?

FRITZ. Surely to-day.

CHRISTINE. You can see him to-morrow, too.

FRITZ. Perhaps I shan't be in Vienna to-morrow.

CHRISTINE. Not in Vienna?

FRITZ. [Noticing her alarm, calmly, cheerfully.] Well, that wouldn't be anything wonderful, would it? I'm going away for a day—or perhaps for two, you child, you.

CHRISTINE. Where to?

FRITZ. Where? . . . Anywhere.—Good heavens, don't make up such a face. . . . I'm going out to my father's estate. . . . Well, is that so terrible to you?

CHRISTINE. And you never tell me about him, either.

FRITZ. No; what a child you are. . . . You don't understand how nice it is to be all alone together. Tell me, don't you feel that?

father. If you have thought it over, and find that you can't forgive me, then drive me away—but don't speak that way.

VYRING. Just listen quietly to me, Christine. You can still do whatever you will. . . . See, Christine, you are so young. Haven't you ever thought . . . [With great hesitation.] that the whole thing might be a mistake?

CHRISTINE. Why do you say that to me, father? I know so well what I have done—and I don't ask anything—not from you and not from anybody in the world, if it has been a mistake. . . . I just told you, drive me away, but . . .

VYRING. [Interrupting.] How can you talk so. . . . Even if it was a mistake, is that any reason for getting desperate right away, such a young creature as you are? Just think how beautiful, how wonderful life is. Just think how many things there are to give you joy, how much youth and how much happiness still lies before you. . . . See, I don't have much of the world any more, and even for me life is still beautiful—and I can still look forward to so many things. How we shall be together—how we shall plan our life, you and I—how you will begin to sing again, now that the beautiful days are here—and how we'll take a whole day off, when summer comes, and go out into the green country—Oh, there are so many lovely things . . . so many. It is silly to give up everything, because one must give up his first happiness, or anything that he thought was that.

CHRISTINE. Why . . . [Anxiously.] then must I give it up?

VYRING. Well, was it happiness? Do you really think, Christine, that you had to tell your father today? I have known it for a long time—and I knew

too that you would tell me. No, it never was happiness for you. . . . Don't I know those eyes? There wouldn't have been tears in them so often, and those cheeks wouldn't have been pale so much, if you had loved a man who was worthy of it.

CHRISTINE. Why, how can you . . . what do you know . . . what have you heard?

VYRING. Nothing, nothing at all. . . . But you yourself told me what he is. . . . A young fellow like that—what does he know? Has he the faintest idea of what falls into his hands—does he know the difference between the true and the false—and all your mad love—did he ever understand that?

CHRISTINE. [More and more alarmed.] You and he. . . . Were you at his house?

VYRING. Why, what are you thinking of! He went away, didn't he? But Christine, I still have a head on my shoulders, and my eyes in my head. Come, child, forget about it, do! Your future lies in an altogether different place. You can, you will still be as happy as you deserve. You will find a man some time who will know what a treasure he has in you.

CHRISTINE. [Has hurried to the chest of drawers to get her hat.]

VYRING. What are you doing?

CHRISTINE. I'm going out.

VYRING. Where to?

CHRISTINE. To him . . . to him.

VYRING. What are you thinking of?

CHRISTINE. You're keeping something from me—let me go.

VYRING. [Holding her firmly.] Come to your senses, child. He isn't there at all. Perhaps he's gone away for a very long time. . . . Stay here; what do you want there? . . . Tomorrow or this

evening I'll go there with you. You can't go out on the street like that . . . do you know how you look?

CHRISTINE. You will go with me?

VYRING. I promise you I will. Only stay here now; sit down and come to your senses again. It's enough to make a man laugh, almost, to look at you . . . and all for nothing. Can't you stand it here with your father at all any more?

CHRISTINE. What is it you know?

VYRING. [More and more helpless.] What should I know? . . . I know that I love you, that you are my only child, that you must stay with me—that you should have stayed with me all the time—

CHRISTINE. Enough—let me go. [*She wrests herself from him and opens the door; Toni appears in it.*]

TONI. [Utters a little cry, as CHRISTINE rushes toward her.] Why do you frighten me so?

CHRISTINE. [Steps back, seeing THEODORE behind Toni.]

THEODORE. [Remains in the doorway; he is dressed in black.]

CHRISTINE. What . . . what is . . . [No answer. *She looks THEODORE in the face; he cannot meet her eyes.*] Where is he, where is he? . . . [In the greatest terror. No answer; all faces are embarrassed and sad.] Where is he? [To THEODORE.] Speak, can't you?

THEODORE. [Tries to speak.]

CHRISTINE. [Looks at him wide-eyed, looks around her, comprehends the look on their faces, her face shows the dawn of this understanding, she utters a terrible cry.] Theodore . . . he is . . .

THEODORE. [Nods.]

CHRISTINE. [Seizes her forehead, cannot under-

*stand it; she goes to THEODORE, takes him by the arm, as if demented.] He is . . . dead? [As if asking herself.]*

VYRING. My child—

CHRISTINE. [Thrusting him away.] Speak, Theodore, speak!

THEODORE. You know all.

CHRISTINE. I know nothing. . . . I don't know what has happened . . . do you think . . . I can't hear everything now? . . . how did it happen . . . Father . . . Theodore . . . [To TONI.] You know it too.

THEODORE. An unfortunate accident.

CHRISTINE. What, what?

THEODORE. He fell.

CHRISTINE. What does that mean: he . . .

THEODORE. He fell in a duel.

CHRISTINE. [Shrieks. *She is about to fall, VYRING sustains her, motions to THEODORE to go. She notes it and seizes him.*] Stay here. . . . I must know all. Do you think you can keep anything from me now?

THEODORE. What else do you want to know?

CHRISTINE. Why—why did he fight a duel?

THEODORE. I don't know the reason.

CHRISTINE. With whom, with whom? . . . You surely know who killed him? . . . Well, well, who . . .

THEODORE. Nobody you know.

CHRISTINE. Who, who?

TONI. Christine!

CHRISTINE. Who? You tell me! [To TONI.] . . . Father, you tell me. . . . [No answer. *She starts to go out. VYRING holds her back.*] Can't I know who killed him, and for what cause?

THEODORE. It was . . . a trivial cause . . .

evening I'll go there with you. You can't go out on the street like that . . . do you know how you look?

CHRISTINE. You will go with me?

VYRING. I promise you I will. Only stay here now; sit down and come to your senses again. It's enough to make a man laugh, almost, to look at you . . . and all for nothing. Can't you stand it here with your father at all any more?

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THEODORE. [Remains in the doorway; he is dressed in black.]

CHRISTINE. What . . . what is . . . [No answer. She looks THEODORE in the face; he cannot meet her eyes.] Where is he, where is he? . . . [In the greatest terror. No answer; all faces are embarrassed and sad.] Where is he? [To THEODORE.] Speak, can't you?

THEODORE. [Tries to speak.]

CHRISTINE. [Looks at him wide-eyed, looks around her, comprehends the look on their faces, her face shows the dawn of this understanding, she utters a terrible cry.] Theodore . . . he is . . .

THEODORE. [Nods.]

CHRISTINE. [Seizes her forehead, cannot under-

*stand it; she goes to THEODORE, takes him by the arm, as if demented.] He is . . . dead? [As if asking herself.]*

VYRING. My child——

CHRISTINE. [Thrusting him away.] Speak, Theodore, speak!

THEODORE. You know all.

CHRISTINE. I know nothing. . . . I don't know what has happened . . . do you think . . . I can't hear everything now? . . . how did it happen . . . Father . . . Theodore . . . [To TONI.] You know it too.

THEODORE. An unfortunate accident.

CHRISTINE. What, what?

THEODORE. He fell.

CHRISTINE. What does that mean: he . . .

THEODORE. He fell in a duel.

CHRISTINE. [Shrieks. She is about to fall, VYRING sustains her, motions to THEODORE to go. She notes it and seizes him.] Stay here. . . . I must know all. Do you think you can keep anything from me now?

THEODORE. What else do you want to know?

CHRISTINE. Why—why did he fight a duel?

THEODORE. I don't know the reason.

CHRISTINE. With whom, with whom? . . . You surely know who killed him? . . . Well, well, who . . .

THEODORE. Nobody you know.

CHRISTINE. Who, who?

TONI. Christine!

CHRISTINE. Who? You tell me! [To TONI.] . . . Father, you tell me. . . . [No answer. She starts to go out. VYRING holds her back.] Can't I know who killed him, and for what cause?

THEODORE. It was . . . a trivial cause . . .

CHRISTINE. You're not telling the truth . . . why, why . . .

THEODORE. Dear Christine . . .

CHRISTINE. [As if about to interrupt, goes up to him; looks at him in silence, then suddenly shrieks.] On account of a woman?

THEODORE. No—

CHRISTINE. Yes—for a woman . . . [Turning to TONI.] for that woman—for that woman that he loved. And her husband—yes, yes, her husband killed him. . . . And I . . . what am I? What was I to him? . . . Theodore . . . haven't you anything for me at all . . . didn't he write down anything? . . . Didn't he tell you anything for me? Didn't you find anything . . . a letter . . . a note . . .

THEODORE. [Shakes his head.]

CHRISTINE. And that evening . . . when he was here, when you came to get him . . . he knew it, he knew then that he perhaps would never . . . And he went away from here to be killed for another woman. No, no, it is not possible . . . didn't he know what he was to me . . . didn't . . .

THEODORE. He did know. On the last morning, when we drove out together . . . he spoke of you too.

CHRISTINE. He spoke of me *too!* Of me *too!* And of what else? Of how many other people, of how many other things, that meant just as much to him as I did! Of me *too!* Oh, God! . . . And of his father and his mother and his room and of the springtime and of the city and of everything, everything that belonged to his life and that he had to give up just as much as he gave up me—of everything he talked to you . . . and of me *too* . . .

THEODORE. [Moved.] He surely loved you.

CHRISTINE. Love? He? I was nothing to him but a pastime—and he died for another woman! And I—I worshiped him! Didn't he know that? . . . That I gave him everything I could give, that I would have died for him—that he was my God and my bliss of Heaven—didn't he see that at all? He could go away from me with a smile, out of my room, and be shot down for another woman. . . . Father, father, can you understand that?

WYRING. [Goes to her.] Christine!

THEODORE. [To TONI.] Child, you might have spared me this.

TONI. [Looks at him venomously.]

THEODORE. I have had enough distress . . . these last days . . .

CHRISTINE. [With sudden resolve.] Theodore, take me to him—I want to see him—once more I want to see him—his face—Theodore, take me to him.

THEODORE. [With a gesture, hesitatingly.] No . . .

CHRISTINE. Why "no"? You can't refuse me that! Surely I can see him once more?

THEODORE. It is too late.

CHRISTINE. Too late? To see his corpse . . . is it too late? Yes . . . yes . . . [She does not understand.]

THEODORE. He was buried this morning.

CHRISTINE. [With the greatest horror.] Buried . . . And I didn't know about it? They shot him . . . and put him in his coffin and carried him out and buried him down in the earth—and I couldn't even see him once more! He's been dead two days—and you didn't come and tell me?

THEODORE. [Much moved.] In these two days I

have . . . You cannot dream all that I . . . Consider that it was my duty to notify his parents—I had to think of many things—and then my own state of mind . . .

CHRISTINE. Your . . .

THEODORE. And then the . . . it was done very quietly. . . . Only the closest relatives and friends . . .

CHRISTINE. The closest—? And I—? . . . What am I?

TONI. They would have asked that.

CHRISTINE. What am I? Less than all the rest—? Less than his relatives, less than—you?

VYRING. My child, my child. Come to me, to me. . . . [He embraces her. To THEODORE.] Go . . . leave me alone with her.

THEODORE. I am very . . . [With tears in his voice.] I never suspected . . .

CHRISTINE. Never suspected what? That I loved him! [VYRING draws her to him; THEODORE looks down; TONI stands near CHRISTINE. Freeing herself.] Take me to his grave!

VYRING. No, no—

TONI. Don't go, Christine.

THEODORE. Christine . . . later . . . tomorrow . . . when you are calmer—

CHRISTINE. Tomorrow? When I shall be calmer? And in a month completely consoled, eh? And in six months I can laugh again, can I? [Laughing shrilly.] And then when will the next lover come?

VYRING. Christine . . .

CHRISTINE. Stay here then . . . I can find the way alone . . .

VYRING and TONI. [Together.] Don't go.

CHRISTINE. It's even better . . . if I . . . let me go, let me go.

VYRING. Christine, stay here.

TONI. Don't go! Perhaps you'll find the other one there—praying.

CHRISTINE. [To herself, her eyes fixed.] I won't pray there . . . no . . . [She rushes out; the others speechless for the moment.]

VYRING. Hurry after her.

[THEODORE and TONI exeunt.]

VYRING. I can't, I can't . . . [He goes painfully from the door to the window.] What does she want . . . what does she want . . . [He looks through the window.] She won't come back—she won't come back! [He sinks to the floor, sobbing loudly.]

CURTAIN.

## POST-MORTEM:

### A NOTE ON MR. BERNARD SHAW AND THE MODERN ENGLISH THEATRE.

T HAS died of discussion," somebody once remarked in answer to the familiar question. "What is wrong with the Drama?" The disease, be it noted, is both internal and external; and the dual symptoms lend additional point to a witty diagnosis. The theatre and the dramatic society have harbored the same germ, and in Mr. Shaw's latest comedy they meet, appropriately enough, in the same hospital. His more recent pieces, from "Major Barbara" to "Misalliance," have been flaunted upon the playbill as "conversations in three acts" or "debates in one sitting"; and in "Fanny's First Play" he goes to the logical extreme in presenting his audience with a discussion within a discussion, including not only everything that is said in the play, but everything that the critics can conceivably say about it. To be sure, the result is most entertaining. Mr. Shaw's medical men joked admirably over the deathbed of Louis Dubedat in "The Doctor's Dilemma;" his imaginary dramatic critics are equally brilliant in the epilogue of "Fanny." They hold a consultation upon the play they have seen, and fail to agree. Each issues his own bulletin, after feeling the dramatic pulse and taking the dramatic temperature. One is for blood-letting to cure the surfeit of theatricality, another for a robuster, Sardou-like infusion of nourishment. One

is for the surgeon's knife, another for purging and fresh air. One is for realism, another for romance. So the consultation proceeds, with much critical talk of intellectualism and emotion, artistic austerity and pamphleteering, the Aristotelian code and the "new technique"; and the result is a summary of contemporary opinion on the subject of the theatre, as visualized from the author's eccentric angle. We laugh at these dramatic medicine-men and their remedies, but they remind us that the patient is in dire straits: literally, one might say, in a critical condition. No art can flourish in such an atmosphere of iconoclasm and unreserve. Its illusion is desiccated by argument, withered by disrespect, crushed by intelligent irresponsibility. And Mr. Shaw is ruthless. He has no mercy for illusions; indeed, he has spent his life in trying to destroy them. The limits of his understanding are purely rational. He is that most dangerous of leaders, the *zu Ende Denker*, the untrammelled thinker without a touch of poetry in his composition. He will go forward to the last analysis without shrinking, for he has not the capacity to shrink. And when the last analysis is reached, when the drama has been diagnosed and discussed to the end, his hand will be ready to sign the death certificate. He will sign it steadily enough, though no doubt with a flourish of wit.

I shall return presently to the subject of Mr. Shaw as leader of a movement. Meanwhile "Fanny's First Play" will serve to illustrate the grotesque disproportion between the interest taken in the advanced English drama and its visible achievement. He has dramatized a whirlpool of discussion. In London, everybody talks about the modern theatre. The Censorship controversy alone,

dragging in its wake a cumbrous mass of petitions and counter-petitions, House of Lords Committees, readings, defences and private performances of censored plays, blunders of the Lord Chamberlain's department, questions in Parliament, and letters to the *Times*, is enough to keep the advanced playwright in the public eye. Not the least of the Censor's sins, it may be remarked by the way, is that he has set walking the pallid ghosts of many plays which would in the ordinary course have been given decent burial within a few days of their birth. Denied admission to the theatre, they haunt the circulating libraries, with the sole and gloomy recommendation that the Lord Chamberlain in his wisdom has pronounced them to be subversive of public morals. The simplest path to notoriety is the authorship of a prohibited piece. Indeed, one is obliged in desperation to pray for the removal of the Censorship, if only in order that dramatists may preserve a little sense of humor and self-respect. One of the penalties of a ridiculous institution is that it tends to make its victims ridiculous. To judge from the arguments of the attacking side in this controversy, it might be supposed that the first claim to distinction of a modern play is that it should deal with an illegal operation or the spread of contagious disease. Works like Ibsen's "Ghosts," Mr. Granville Barker's "Waste," Tolstoy's "Powers of Darkness," Mr. Zangwill's "Next Religion" and M. Brieux's *Les Avariés* are cited quite indiscriminately as martyrs of a discredited tyranny. The fact that they are not all masterpieces is lost sight of in the certainty that they are all prohibited. So the "modern" movement tends to become stereotyped. The public learns to confuse the advance of an art with the expression of an

unpopular opinion, and taste is swallowed up in moral indignation.

The controversy, however, has its amusing side. A few months ago there came my way for signature a humble petition of dramatic authors to His Majesty King George V., praying for the abolition of the office of Examiner of Plays on grounds of public policy, and declaring that there exists in England at the present moment an awakening of original native drama unparalleled since the time of Shakespeare. It was represented that this movement is hampered by moral surveillance, and must be freed at all costs. The comparison with Shakespeare (who lived in the reign of "your illustrious predecessor Queen Elizabeth") may be pardoned as a tactical move likely to impress the King; but for no other reason. The whole document was a rather self-conscious effort of unconscious humor.

So much for the ever-present Censorship problem. But the interest in the theatre is much wider. Critics and journalists have popularized new phrases,—“the drama of ideas,” “the repertory movement,” and so on. The public is beginning for the first time to read modern plays. Bishops and popular preachers bless the theatre as “a great engine of social enlightenment.” They look upon the drama as a moral question, just as the Censorship reformers point to the immense regenerative influence of prohibited plays, and the heinous immorality of “Dear Old Charlie” and the rest of the licensed farces (thereby implying that the latter should be prohibited in their turn). Feminists and revolutionaries clamor for a propagandist stage. On the other hand, artists like Mr. Gordon Craig declaim against what they call the “modern sermon-drama,” and concentrate upon scenery and dig-

nity of production all the enthusiasm of Art for Art's sake. Every shade of opinion is represented, if not on the stage itself, at least in the Great Dramatic Discussion.

Now the visible results of all this turmoil are, as I have hinted, curiously slight. There are two so-called repertory theatres in the English provinces, at Manchester and Liverpool; another at Glasgow, and a fourth at the Abbey Theatre, Dublin, the headquarters of the Irish National Theatre Society. Of these the English and Scottish theatres deserve the title "repertory" only in so far as they employ a more or less fixed company of actors, produce a different play (by no means, necessarily, a new play) every week or two, and occasionally revive a successful work from the previous season. They get most of their pieces, however, from London; and they can hardly claim to be "uncommercial." Intelligent successes like Mr. Arnold Bennett's "The Honeymoon" go the rounds of the provinces with an ordinary touring company: intelligent failures like Mr. Galsworthy's "The Pigeon" pass into the repertory theatre, for the simple reason that outside London their appeal is limited. Mr. Frohman's enterprise of 1910 at the Duke of York's has so far been the only attempt to carry on modern play-production in the manner of an opera-house or an endowed theatre abroad, by changing the bill nightly; and that ended in disaster. The Stage Society and other play-producing organizations give only five or six private performances in each year. In the everyday theatre in London the two managements to which the modern playgoer naturally turns with interest are those of Miss McCarthy and Granville Barker at the Kingsway, and of Messrs. Vedrenne and Eadie at the Royalty. Both have hit

upon extraordinary successes. "Fanny's First Play" is approaching its five-hundredth performance, and "Milestones" will probably do even better. Both managements, too, as if by way of excuse for the monotony of their evening bills, are giving us interesting matinées of original work. But the other theatres remain almost untouched. At the moment of writing (June, 1912), out of some twenty-seven plays in the West End, only "The New Sin," by Macdonald Hastings, and "Rutherford and Son," by Miss Sowerby, can be set beside the Royalty and Kinsway productions as genuine efforts in the right direction. At the same time, the older playwrights, like Sir Arthur Pinero, Mr. Carton and Mr. Sutro, are very much in the background. Their plays run on steadily, almost unheeded. The Dramatic Discussion does not include them, except perhaps in an historical survey. Their successes are eclipsed by more notable failures. It is true that the mountain of the theatre has labored to bring forth a mouse, but we are all watching the interesting little creature, and talking of its growth.

If we turn from this general view to the recent work of individual dramatists, the immediate result appears no greater. Mr. Shaw's "Fanny" has already been touched upon. It stands midway between the agreeable farce of "You Never Can Tell" and the verbal pyrotechnics of "Getting Married" and "Misalliance." It is at once a drama and a commentary, a farce and a lampoon, a sermon and a topical revue, a manifesto and an impertinence, an apologia and a revenge. A lampoon for the curious, a sermon for the elect, an impertinence for the dull, an apologia for the author and a revenge upon the critics. "Bernard Shaw . . . at his best" has been the legend upon the playbill for the past year. The

straightest sect of the Shavians may disagree with this verdict, but there can be no doubt that the play is Bernard Shaw at his most popular. For the English are by this time well aware that an Irishman of genius lives among them, and the prospect of seeing him " . . . at his best" has proved alluring.

Mr. Granville Barker has given us nothing since "The Madras House" (1910), and we are still waiting to see whether he can survive the influence of Shaw. He has fine insight into the character of quiet, modern, intelligent people: a subtle wit, and an actor's experience of the theatre. But hitherto he has been vague and inconclusive, and the fault has grown rather than diminished with each new work. Dramatic ideas, as every playgoer knows, commonly run to seed either in verbiage or sentimentality. In sentimentality among opportunist playwrights, who select from the mass of current ideas any that will create a dramatic effect, and reproduce them colored by personal taste or discretion, in any shape from the phraseology of the leading article to that of the feuilleton. In verbiage among genuine propagandists, reformers, politicians, and the like, who use drama as a means to an intellectual end. Now Mr. Barker is certainly a reformer. He is also determined (almost aggressively determined) to be unsentimental. Without the brilliance or the intellectual capacity of Shaw, he wanders at large over the latter's immense field of thought: illuminating a point here and there, reducing some fantastic exuberance of wit to rational dimensions, creating now and then a new and interesting type, but limiting himself very definitely both in mental attitude and method. His characters are peculiarly grey and bloodless: his technique is slipshod to a degree.

He has no sense of economy, and apparently no desire for it. He is prodigal of words, of *dramatis personae*, of ideas: prodigal without impetuosity. His men and women waste their substance in decorous living. Furthermore, in publishing his plays he follows Shaw's bad example of keeping up a running fire of commentary upon the characters and their doings under the guise of stage directions, and so expanding in analysis what should be concentrated in dialogue form. This is the method of the novelist, not of the playwright. It would be an admirable exercise for all modern dramatists to clear their dialogue of such encumbrances, and allow their characters to explain themselves, like those, say, of Molière and Ibsen. Then we should be on the right path to the recovery of dramatic style. A single speech of real point and individuality is worth all the italicized commentary ever written.

I have touched upon this vice of slovenly method at some length because it illustrates very clearly the sort of influence which Shaw is exerting upon younger dramatists. The whole trend of his work has been anarchical. He cares as little for literature as for any other form or tradition. Even if he understood the meaning of beauty in style, he would only regard it as another heresy to be annihilated: another manifestation of "art for art's sake." The crude and unimaginative vocabulary of his own plays (and indeed of all his writings) is made tolerable only by sheer intellectual grasp and force of wit. His diction suffers from elephantiasis. He piles adjectives upon nouns in a dizzy polemic, and stands upon his head at the summit; only to distract our attention by another feat of agility before we have time to observe that the structure is toppling.

But he has trained his audience to be content with nothing less than acrobatic perfection, and here lies the danger for his imitators. With all their cleverness, they cannot hope to repeat the performance. At best they can only dance upon the ruins.

From Mr. Galsworthy has come "The Pigeon" (1912), played at the Royalty Theatre. Mr. Galsworthy is in the most exact sense a social dramatist. Others with that reputation, like Hauptmann, Gorky, Heijermans and Brieux, have given us proletarian studies, "tendency" plays, frankly partisan manifestoes on behalf of this class or that. But Mr. Galsworthy's province is the whole of existing society. He does not attempt to demolish the social house of cards at one blow; he merely takes it to pieces methodically for a shuffle on the ground floor. In "The Silver Box," "Strife" and "Justice" he selected as his subject a meeting-point of classes, a junction where the evasion of social responsibility is impossible. All of his plays might be called "Strife," and all of them, equally, "Justice." He contemplates the struggle and holds the scales. "The Pigeon" does not deal with any big social problem. The various classes are not called before the judicial bench, or the court of industrial arbitration. They are rather shown, as in the author's novel "Fraternity," quietly intermingling and inextricably bound up with one another. Mr. Galsworthy stands apart from movements and influences, just as he stands apart from his own characters. He would, indeed, be very difficult to influence. He is never enthusiastic, never exuberant. Paradox and dialectics have no place in his mental scheme. There is no sign in his work that he has even read the plays of his contemporaries. But for a lack of the Falstaffian quality, he would seem to be the typical

Englishman as romanticised by English imagination: upright, solid, hard-headed, perhaps a trifle soft-hearted. If only he could be a little more interested in individuals, a little more disposed to love and pity them, instead of society at large! For his preoccupation with types and classes is very narrow, however broad it may be sociologically. It was, I think, in Mr. Barker's "*Madras House*" that some one protested against the habit of regarding humanity as a lot of ants on a heap. And Mr. Galsworthy has yet to give us a memorable character: a personality who controls his own life and the social machinery, instead of a group of determinist puppets swayed by forces over which they have no power.

Mr. Masefield's last play was "*Pompey the Great*," a striking attempt at the restoration of the hero. Pompey is as English as Mr. Shaw's Julius Cæsar was Irish. He stands for law, order, dignity, courage, idealism, nobility, patriotism, devotion, honour, moderate counsel;—for all the qualities, in a word, which have been ridiculed for the past twenty years in the modern theatre from which Mr. Masefield himself has sprung. Listen to what Mr. Shaw says upon the subject, in the preface to his "*Plays Pleasant*": "Idealism, which is only a flattering name for romance in politics and morals, is as obnoxious to me as romance in ethics or religion. . . . To me the tragedy and comedy of life lie in the consequences, sometimes terrible, sometimes ludicrous, of our persistent attempts to found our institutions on the ideals suggested to our imaginations by our half-satisfied passions, instead of on a genuinely scientific natural history." In other words, Shaw perceived in the claimant to heroic virtues at best a pitiful dupe, at worst a hypocrite.

The genuinely scientific natural history left no room for heroes; and heroes, accordingly, there were none. The chocolate-cream soldier of "Arms and the Man" explained the omission concisely. Raina said to him, "*Some* soldiers, I know, are *afraid* of death," and he replied, "All of them, dear lady, all of them, believe me. It is our duty to live as long as we can." Napoleon in "The Man of Destiny" posed for a while with "I am only the servant of the French Republic, following humbly in the footsteps of the heroes of classical antiquity. I win battles for my country, not for myself"; but he was speedily put out of countenance. His own philosophy emerged later: "There are three sorts of people in the world—the low people, the middle people, and the high people. The low people and the high people are alike in one thing: they have no scruples, no morality. The low are beneath morality, the high above it. I am not afraid of either of them; for the low are unscrupulous without knowledge, so that they make an idol of me; while the high are unscrupulous without purpose, so that they go down before my will."

Now observe the gulf. Mr. Masefield's Pompey says in earnest what the Shavian Napoleon says in persiflage. He wins battles for his country, not for himself. His faith is summed up in the three sentences "Life requires a dignity," "The upright soul is safe," "Death cannot crush what comprehends heaven." He conceives of Rome neither as the natural prey of ambition nor as the citadel of a Jingo Empire, to be defended at all costs against barbarian forces: but as a quality of greatness, a collective will asserting truth, maintaining peace, enforcing law. Caesar, the demagogue, it is true, would tell a different story. He would see in Rome

only a corrupt oligarchy to be deposed, and an oppressed people awaiting deliverance. But Pompey turns from the actual to the potential. The abuses are transient; the "splendid city full of lights" remains a temple of wisdom. For that city he lives and dies.

It must be admitted that the conception of Pompey is barely realized. He inclines to become a lay figure. But he has the qualities of his defects. He represents an artistic reaction against mere anarchism and cleverness; and Mr. Masefield, who has recently given us two English epics in "*The Everlasting Mercy*" and "*The Widow in the Bye Street*," may yet bring him to life in another incarnation.

Mr. Charles McEvoy's later efforts have been "*All That Matters*" (Haymarket, 1911) and "*The Situation at Newbury*" (Liverpool Repertory Theatre, 1912). His place in the theatre is a peculiar one. There was talk some years ago of a holiday cure for our drama by "bringing the scent of hay across the footlights"; with, it need hardly be said, deplorable results. The village melodrama as imagined by a week-ending West End playwright, with its theatrical barn, its stage rustics and its forced dialect, soon creaked into the oblivion it deserved. But when Miss Horniman's company took possession of the Gaiety Theatre in Manchester, some of the earliest pieces produced were the village plays of Mr. McEvoy. He understands the scent of hay. He certainly writes melodrama, but his method is native and instinctive rather than acquired. It springs from a view of life rather than from a view of the theatre, and for so much we must be grateful. He is independent to a fault, and since his first play, "*David Ballard*," he has never developed an idea with any technical skill. But he does not make a

virtue of looseness, in the manner of Mr. Barker and the "new technicians." Without theories of any kind, he goes his own simple way, and he stands nearer to Mr. Masefield than any other dramatist.

From Mr. Arnold Bennett we have had two new plays, "The Honeymoon" and (in collaboration with Mr. Knoblauch) "Milestones." "The Honeymoon" was a slight and entertaining comedy, with a successful part for Miss Marie Tempest. "Milestones" is a study of family life in three generations, from 1860 to 1912, and the transition from crinolines and domesticity to the hobble skirt and independence has charmed London. Mr. Bennett now writes plays as to the manner born. The theatre has become a part of his omnivorous experience, and he has only to produce, let us say, a blank-verse tragedy, an epic poem, and a book of sonnets in order to exhaust the field of literature. That "insatiable zest of life" so often referred to in his novels urges him on to fresh conquests. Incidentally, his popularity is doing good service to the modern stage, for there is no one who can educate an audience so subtly. After "The Honeymoon," a comedy by Mr. Jones or Mr. Carton appears dull, pompous, prejudiced, old-fashioned. Mr. Bennett has an irreverent mind, but he offends no sensibilities. He has an unprejudiced mind, but he would never fall foul of the Censorship. He is incapable of snobbery, but the House of Lords itself would laugh at his comedies without resentment. No one could possibly quarrel with him, except perhaps Mrs. Humphry Ward. His opinions are stated only by implication: and that, after all, is the true method of comedy. Let us bid Mr. Bennett adieu, pausing only to exclaim, as Sergius exclaimed of Bluntschli, "What a man!"

The Manchester Repertory Theatre has brought

forward two new playwrights in Mr. Stanley Houghton and Mr. Harold Brighouse. Both have recently had plays performed in London: Mr. Brighouse's "The Odd Man Out" at the Royalty matinées, and Mr. Houghton's "Hindle Wakes" at the Stage Society. Both, too, have discovered the infinite possibilities of domestic comedy, when once the old stage conventions of filial piety and sentiment have been eliminated. Mr. Houghton, for example, deals almost entirely with the younger generation of the Northern middle class: a generation by no means consciously revolutionist, or Suffragist, or even conspicuously intelligent; but a generation which is just making up its mind in a fine, blundering, chaotic fashion, with as few prejudices as Mr. Bennett himself, and which finds an excellent foil in the hard-headed stupidity of its parents. Soon, of course, this type of play will appear as old-fashioned as the comedies of Robertson; but Mr. Houghton and his successors will always find another generation ready to their hand.

Mr. Macdonald Hastings' "The New Sin" is more interesting, though the author overreaches himself a little in his apparent conviction that what London wants is cleverness at all costs. The new sin is remaining alive when your death would clearly benefit the world, or a group of survivors. A fantastic theme, depending upon an incredible stage will and other cumbrous machinery, but brilliantly treated, with real insight and wit. There are no women in the play, and their first appearance in the same author's "Love—and What Then?" is unconvincing. Nevertheless, Mr. Hastings can yet save himself, if he will only repress his taste for comic bishops and false epigrams. Suicide may be a dramatic virtue, but comic bishops are assuredly sinful.

I come now to the most difficult task in this brief paper: that of attempting to give an impression of the newer English playwrights, not individually, but as a whole. One characteristic is the curious insistence with which they tend to reflect one side of the national temperament,—the Puritan side. Mr. Shaw, Mr. Barker, Mr. Galsworthy, Mr. Masefield—they are all more or less strongly tinged with Puritanism. They all have a touch of Praise-God Barebones in their disposition. Their mistrust of the senses, their dislike of pure illusion, their austerity of mind and stern moral earnestness are patent at first sight. This is no doubt partly due to the influence of Ibsen, the Arch-Puritan. But it is surely the sublime paradox of Mr. Shaw's career that, invading a country where Puritan hatred of the drama has always been strongest, he should have converted the stage into a Puritan pulpit. Topsy-turvydom could go no further. His three plays for Puritans are only a part of the general scheme: essentially all his writings are alike. If a modern Jeremy Collier should appear to denounce the profaneness and immorality of the English stage, Mr. Shaw would never take Congreve's place as his antagonist. Rather he would take pen in hand to supplement the polemic. He has done so already, indeed, in his diatribes against the laxity of the Censorship. It was with the voice of Jeremy Collier that he denounced the romantic sensuality of musical comedy and the coarse innuendo of Mr. Brookfield's adaptation from Labiche. "Mrs. Warren's Profession" is a Puritan manifesto, none the less unmistakable because the old conceptions of justice and righteousness have emerged in the form of Socialism and a woman's right to a living wage. The Puritans still mistrust Mr. Shaw, but only, I think, on account of his wit. They turn to Mr. Gals-

worthy because he is duller and more reliable, or to Mr. Masefield for his depth of feeling and good intentions. They are, in fact, just making up their mind about the theatre in the puzzled fashion of that younger generation mentioned above. And when they have made up their mind, they will probably discover that Mr. Shaw has more in common with Bunyan than with Sheridan.

It is perhaps unfair to complain of this tendency, for Puritanism remains the most important contribution which the English spirit has made to world-ethics, and the characteristic of the modern school is ethical force. But we do not want "The Merry Wives of Windsor" treated in the manner of Mr. Galsworthy, or "The Way of the World" in the manner of Mr. Masefield; or, rather, we do not want the modern Falstaff and the modern Millamant neglected on the stage. The Restoration dramatists managed tolerably well without a prophet or a seer, and it would only be a fitting historical parallel if the Roundhead and Commonwealth days in which we live were followed by a restoration of the Comic Spirit.

This leads us to the question of Mr. Shaw's influence as a wit. A witty author of plays, it need hardly be said, is by no means necessarily a comic dramatist. "In general," Macaulay wrote in his essay on Machiavelli, "tragedy is corrupted by eloquence, and comedy by wit." By *universal* eloquence and wit, that is to say: the distinction is just. "No writers," he added, "have injured the comedy of England so deeply as Congreve and Sheridan. Both were men of splendid wit and polished taste. Unhappily, they made all their characters in their own likeness. Their works bear the same relation to the legitimate drama which a transparency bears to a

painting: no delicate touches; no hues imperceptibly fading one into another; the whole is lighted up with a universal glare. . . . It was surely not from want of wit that Shakespeare adopted so different a manner. . . . It would have been easy for that fertile mind to have given Bardolph and Shallow as much wit as Prince Hal, and to have made Dogberry and Verges retort on each other in sparkling epigrams. But he knew that such indiscriminate prodigality was '*from* the purpose of playing, whose end, both at the first and last, was, and is, to hold, as it were, the mirror up to Nature.' ”

Now, if this was true of Congreve and Sheridan (and it was certainly very near the truth), it is still more true in the case of Mr. Shaw. Congreve and Sheridan were dramatists with inherent beauty of style; Mr. Shaw is just as anarchical in his use of words as in his philosophy of life. His wit carries him away in every scene: it is not only prodigal, but uncontrollable. In intellectual capacity he stands alone; but he has taught other dramatists the fatally easy trick of making an audience laugh, and so far his authority is demoralizing.

That word authority reads oddly in a time when so far as the drama is concerned, every one is a law unto himself. But there is no escaping Mr. Shaw. He is the King Charles' head of the dramatic discussion, even though the features be more reminiscent of Cromwell. And his very encouragement to anarchy is authoritative. His technical method, at all events in his later plays, is simply that of the eccentric showman. He provides a series of intellectual “turns,” of exercises in conversational rough-and-tumble; and then asks us to believe that he is replacing the traditional well-made play by a new dramatic form. That, however, is only one of

his little jokes. The playgoer does not need the rules of Aristotle in order to distinguish between good craftsmanship and bad. Experience teaches him. Theories of dramaturgy, like all other theories, pass lightly over the heads of an audience; they can only harm the playwright.

English drama, then, is passing through a dangerous phase. It is overburdened with Puritanism masked in cleverness, anarchy supported by ignorance, and crudity concealed by wit. But it has wonderful enthusiasm. It has not completely succumbed even to discussion. And when once the need for this discussion is past, it may look forward to a glorious resurrection.

ASHLEY DUKES.

## THE DRAMA LEAGUE CONVENTION

"There was life in the air, and a newness, the diffusion of talents, ingenuities, experiments."  
HENRY JAMES.



FTER the convention adjourned, I asked the president what was the strongest impression it had left on her mind. She replied that it was the fact that at any time during any of the sessions she could see in the audience before her at least ten eminent and widely known men and women who could be called on to speak at a moment's notice. Thus several programs might have been filled with addresses as good as the excellent ones which were delivered.

The chairman of the Playgoing committee, plied with the same question, answered that she was most impressed with a singular discovery that was made after the forces assembled. The most eminent students of the drama had been invited to lend distinction to the occasion; but as the meetings progressed, it proved that they were all active workers in the League. One was a committee member, another a chairman, another a department head, another a secretary, etc. The League had, without realizing it, kept within the ranks of its hardest workers in selecting names to grace its programs.

One is reminded of Dr. Baker of Harvard, who says he has been a lonely drama league by himself for twenty years, but who promptly joined the organization as soon as it was formed, and as promptly went to work. All the most famous lonely leagues in the country seem to have been attracted to the convention.

To many members the greatest wonder was the continuous glow of that social spirit which brightened the League at its inception, but which might easily have been quenched in the course of such rapid growth and development. A year ago the League declared itself not a fad nor a new cult, but merely one of the many social awakenings in another center of life. To-day it is as free as it was then from aloofness of spirit or restricted effort for the few. Last year it announced that it was striving to make its best efforts pull together with the best efforts of manager and producer, so that the whole public might get the benefit. To-day it is still cheerfully taking the theater as it is for a starting point, and drama-leaguing within it as well as outside of it. It still holds fast the belief that all art, and especially dramatic art, is for everybody, and that the finer it is the greater number of people and the more kinds of people it ought to reach. A year ago it took heart in the thought that since two plays cannot occupy the same stage at the same time, every night that a good play can be kept on, all bad plays are kept off. To-day it talks still more confidently of cultivating a taste for good plays merely by cutting off the supply of bad ones. When skeptics laugh at the idea of reforming the morality of the stage (see Mr. Dooley) the Leaguers laugh, too, and go on working harder than ever. They have a sense of humor. They seldom prate of betterment or uplift, but often of sanity, optimism, and good-fellowship. They are still pleading for members, and more and more members, instead of large endowment funds. The League has almost exceeded the speed limit in progress, but it is still safely headed in the right direction.

This second annual convention of the Drama

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League of America lasted three days. There were six long sessions, crowded with reports, discussions, and addresses. On the opening night there was a dinner with speeches, and the next day, under League auspices, there was an open-air festa. The official account of all proceedings fills a forty-page pamphlet. Obviously there is space in *THE DRAMA* for only concise review and brief comment.

The first business session convened Wednesday morning, April 24th, to discuss "The League as a National Body." Mrs. Best, the President, was in the chair, and made the report of the Publicity committee, of which she had acted as chairman during the year. Her opening remarks were in part as follows:

Viewing in retrospect the work of this committee for the year, two things stand out with special prominence—the wonderful way in which the work has spread, and the quality of the interest which it has aroused.

At our first convention, a year ago last January, we were a national organization in name only. For though we had a goodly number of individual members and affiliated clubs in twenty-three states, there was no definitely organized center, except Chicago, and no community interest anywhere. During the year, by means of volunteer labor, and at an expense of less than three hundred dollars, we have organized nine centers and spread the work to forty-four states and to Canada; and we are now planning to organize other cities and small towns. Our actual paid membership in these centers is 10,000, and our affiliated membership is conservatively estimated at 100,000.

The cities already officered and doing active work are Boston, Philadelphia, Brooklyn, Detroit, Ann Arbor, Duluth, Louisville, Denver, Superior. Organization is also effected in Grand Rapids, LaCrosse, Peru and Milwaukee. The cities agitating organization are New York, Cincinnati, Pittsburgh, St. Louis, Kansas City, Erie, Rochester, Raleigh, Salt Lake, Boise, San Francisco, Los Angeles, St. Paul, Minneapolis, Jackson, Toledo, Cleveland and Troy.

The point of attack varies according to the character of the place. In large cities we enlist the various clubs and social circles, by stimulating drama study; by arranging lectures and public meetings; by calling for drama literature in the public library; by demanding good criticism from the press; and by organizing a public to attend and to bulletin artistic plays which do not always succeed with the greater public. In the smaller cities or towns, the benefit of belonging to a national organization makes an appeal, as well as the hope of profiting by the proposed One-Night-Stand system. In college and normal towns the educational side of the work appeals. Libraries join for the sake of our literature and study courses. All over the country professors and club women, students and society women, managers, actors and dramatists, school teachers and children, the lovers of amateur acting and pageantry, all are rapidly enlisting. Our ability to respond to the various needs of different communities constitutes our greatest strength, and encourages the belief that we can in the end become truly national.

The spread of League propaganda is due in great measure to the work of volunteer speakers. Last summer addresses were made at over fifty Chautauquas. The League interests have also been presented during the year to twelve State Federation conventions. On three occasions there were opportunities to address large conventions of teachers. The work has also been put before nearly seventy Woman's Clubs in and about Chicago. There have also been frequent and prominent notices in magazines and newspapers.

But perhaps the most valuable service the League can render will be in the case of the one-night-stand towns. The situation in these places is desperate and the local manager is powerless to alter it. The League operating through a local club can influence bookings by guaranteeing against loss, advertising good attractions in advance, bringing about some regularity in place of the present alternating congestion and dearth of attractions, and building up a chain of one-night-stands which can be visited profitably by good traveling companies, where now they are visited only by inferior ones. This is a great field for altruistic effort. It means an opportunity to reach the whole country, by establishing a relation between great centers, smaller cities, and outlying towns. In encouraging a noble form of art, it unifies standards of taste, and creates a truly national audience.

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The Chair then introduced Mr. J. E. Williams, of Streator, Ill., who spoke upon "The Drama League in the Night Stands":

The co-operative efforts of playgoers, under the direction of the League, have hitherto been confined to the larger cities. It is now proposed to extend this form of effort to the smaller cities and towns, which are known as the one-night stands—so called because companies usually remain there for one night only. From the beginning I have held the conviction that here was the great opportunity of the League.

In the cities, as I have said, the League movement has been a struggle to improve the quality of the drama. In the night stands it is a struggle for existence. It is a question of whether we can have drama of any sort. Theatrical conditions have come to the pass that good companies cannot visit night-stands without loss, nor can theatres devoted to the drama be operated at a profit.

It is to this question of a remedy that I wish to direct the attention of the League. I can give it to you in three words:

Lyceumize the theatre.

I mean that we should guarantee the audience in advance just as we do for a lyceum course. When a lecture course is planted in a town the bureau takes no chances. The good people get out and sell enough tickets to guarantee the cost of the course.

Time was when a company costing from \$300 to \$500 a day would take the risk of playing a night-stand without other security than faith in its reputation and its advance agent. Such companies in the past two seasons have played more than once to less than fifty dollars gross, and their faith has grown cold.

The League can take the initiative in lyceumizing the theatre. It ought to be done by some non-commercial interest that can be trusted. The League is the only body in America that has the organization, and the confidence of the people sufficiently to undertake this work.

Wherever a local branch of the League exists it should first ascertain the dramatic needs of the town. The number of attractions required would vary with the size of the town. Having agreed on the probable number, the committee should draw up a subscription list and circulate it among theatre

goers, until they had say five hundred tickets pledged for each attraction selected for the season.

I would suggest that before undertaking the work the League should secure pledges from all the important producing and booking managers stipulating that they would give a preference to league towns when routing their attractions through the territory in which they were situated. There should be no difficulty about this, as their own interest would insure their going into a town in which there were five hundred guaranteed tickets. Co-operation should be had with the local manager, who would also be interested in procuring the best possible attraction for his town.

It is easy to foresee that not many towns would develop enough enthusiasm to list five hundred tickets by voluntary effort. I should favor supplementing volunteer effort wherever necessary by employing professional listers. These listers should be employed by and be under the exclusive direction of the League, but they should co-operate with local branches wherever possible. The revenue for their support should be derived from a percentage of the gross receipts of the attraction benefiting by their efforts. When we consider that attractions frequently pay twenty or twenty-five per cent for "auspices" under the present system it will be seen that a five per cent tax would be very moderate. I believe managers, traveling and local, would be glad to pro rate the expense of listing towns.

The attractions to be presented should be selected jointly by the League and the local committee. Preference should be given to attractions bulletined by the League wherever possible, but where enough bulletined plays could not be secured to fill out the season, recourse should be had to other available plays. Care should be taken to select such plays as would be likely to please the "larger public." Under a guarantee system, such as is here proposed, there should not be much trouble in finding a sufficient number of pleasing and acceptable plays, for it is only the plays that have made a decided popular success in New York or Chicago that are sent on the road by their managers.

In order to recommend a supply of plays adequate to meet the needs of the night stands, it may be necessary for the League to waive its critical standards, but there will still remain the function of selecting the best from the stock actually available; and who shall say that it will not serve its

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own purpose better by helping people to the best plays they can like, than by urging them to support what they ought to like, but which they are, as yet, unable to enjoy?

The local theatre needs the same conscious, purposive guidance that does the school or church. It won't run itself. Competition, as a motive, has broken down. It cannot be run in the interest of the better drama, the better play-goer, or the better community solely by the managerial profit-making motive. If it is to be saved, or to be made worth saving, there must be put into it the same sort of self-giving energy that goes into art, religion, education, and into the support of ethical and philanthropic institutions.

I suggest that the initiative may come from some such society as the Drama League, organized as it is to support the better drama from public spirited motives. Co-ordination, direction and management may also come from the League. But the great mass of the energizing power must come from the play-goers in the night-stands themselves. They must stand ready with money and influence to make the local theatre a public institution like the library, the school or the church. They must put brains and purpose into it, and make the theatre meet the reasonable dramatic needs of the community; not as an agency of dissipation, but one of ever deepening and continuing enjoyment of the better drama.

The programme I have sketched may seem large, but it has the advantage that it may be tried with small beginnings. One town may start it, but in its logical outreachings it is ambitious enough for a society that takes the continent as its province.

Before the convention adjourned, an amendment to the by-laws, part of which follows, was unanimously adopted:

The League members in any one town or city may form a local centre of the Drama League, with the approval of the National Board.

\* \* \*

These centres shall be of two kinds:

1. The Producing Centre.
2. The One-Night Stand, or Week Stand.

\* \* \*

The One-Night or Week Stand shall have local autonomy

and meet all local expenses, but may not issue original bulletins. They shall receive information from the National Committee in regard to plays deserving support and can receive bulletins in bulk from any Producing Centre which they may choose. They shall not issue bulletins, but may issue notice of plays or reprints of bulletins if they desire.

\* \* \*

The Wednesday afternoon session was in the hands of the Educational committee, Professor Theodore B. Hinckley, of the University High School, chairman. The general subject for discussion was "The Cultivation of Better Taste for Drama."

Professor Hinckley prefaced his report by saying that he had been chairman for half the year only, Miss Mary Gray Peck, of the University of Minnesota, having conducted the work for seven months. He explained that the Educational committee is composed of the chairmen of seven sub-committees. He then emphasized the fact that a widespread study of the Drama is essential. It is necessary to spread the reputation of the League as authority on questions regarding drama. It must have the confidence of city centers, clubs and universities. He suggested an increase of courses, especially of simpler ones, for the extension work. Drama libraries are to be planned, and the writing of pamphlets on stage-craft, pageantry, plays, etc., is to be encouraged. In closing, the chairman promised a general stimulation of the work, and coöperation with all communities and their needs. Then followed brief reports from the sub-committees.

Professor George P. Baker, of Harvard, chairman of the Drama Study Department, was not able to be present, but reported that his committee had issued a course of study on "The Irish Drama," and that a course on "Technique," and one on "Mod-

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ern Drama," and a bibliography of all dramas published in the last ten years were nearly ready. He also reported an encouraging year for the Boston League, of which he is president, and wonderful growth throughout New England. As Prof. Baker is to be in Europe next year, the League will lose his invaluable help; but it takes pride in announcing that Brander Matthews of Columbia has consented to take charge of this important department.

Miss Cora Mel Patten, originator of the work with children, reported for the Junior Department, of which she is chairman. This department is organizing Junior Leagues, and hopes to establish children's theatres. As 32,000 children attend the theatres daily in Chicago alone, the need of direction is apparent.

Thirteen groups of children have been formed in public schools, settlements, and churches, with a paid-up membership as Junior Leagues. Addresses on children's dramatics have been given in more than sixty counties under the auspices of high schools, normal schools and woman's clubs. In Indiana, Illinois, Ohio, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, the Dakotas, Nebraska, Idaho, Oregon, and California, drama work has been carried on by capable workers, and thousands of children have been permanently influenced. A Children's Theatre in Boston, established by the Leaguers in October, made so great an appeal that attendance on five-and-ten-cent theatres has greatly decreased. Every lyceum course should embody one high-class entertainment for children.

Later, Mr. Bregg, of Pittsburgh, made a plea for a mother's department. Young people use far less judgment in the selection of plays than in the choice of drinks at a soda water fountain.

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Miss Houston mentioned that the bulletins always indicate what plays are suitable for children, or of special interest to young people.

Miss Patten urged the establishment of a children's theatre under League patronage, where children might see suitable dramatic productions. To the coming generation we must look for the higher appreciation of good drama, and no effort which is made for educating the child is lost. Children are a most responsive audience, for they are natural "creative listeners," who make of a work of art a perfect whole.

The sub-committee which is in charge of the playground work has arranged to give three plays this summer in eight different playgrounds. Permission has been obtained from the mayor, and Mrs. Young has offered the use of the adjoining school buildings. Rehearsals are to be conducted in the mornings. The grounds are to be well lighted, so that plays may be given in the evening.

Mr. John Merrill, of the Francis Parker School, spoke of the value of drama work on the playground. Education should be carried on all the year and should be in the open as much as possible. The dramatic instinct is necessary in the development of children. It makes all school work vital and easy. By wise arrangement in the various branches of this work, the children will find that the playgrounds are places not only for amusement and physical growth, but also for mental growth.

The Thursday morning session was devoted to the work of the Playgoing committee, the general topic being "Play Attending." The President spoke of the work of the Playgoing committee as the most difficult of all, because so entirely new and untried. If the problem were merely how to fix workable

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standards, and to make the style of the bulletins both popular and educational, that would be perplexing enough. But the chairman is constantly beset with unforeseen and unforeseeable difficulties. There is need of patient striving in practical matters, such as securing greater accuracy in the addressing firms, better service for the postoffice, etc.

Great credit is due to the chairman for the wisdom and policy which have kept managers and actors in a friendly attitude toward the League. The committee should be loyally supported by the confidence and actual play attendance of all League members.

Miss Alice M. Houston, chairman of the Playgoing committee, then took charge of the program, speaking in part as follows:

The work of this committee is to organize into a compact theatre-going body a public which is pledged to support good plays.

Play attending and play bulletining is not all of the committee's work. Attention has also been given to the reduced rate proposition, and to the problems of the one-night stand.

The bulletins are twofold in purpose: (1) to give information about the play; (2) to appraise the play. These bulletins are not, as has more than once been said, just another opinion on a play. They furnish dramatic criticism that is neither advertisement nor professional reviewing—an opinion unique in kind and value. The committee is composed of the scholar, the structure expert, the writer, the man of business, and the mere lover of good plays—a group of independent, capable workers, qualified to judge plays. The bulletin comment represents the consensus of opinion of this group of volunteers, not a one-man judgment. In order to keep unbiased minds, the committee never accepts the proffered courtesy of theatre tickets, and the bulletins are issued entirely independent of any outside influence. The work of the committee is in no sense a censorship, but is intended at all times to be constructive and affirmative.

The mailing list of the first bulletin ever sent out, September 20, 1910, was 200. The largest issue of last season was 10,000. The total circulation of bulletins for this year has been over 100,000.

An attempt was made last autumn to compute the number of tickets purchased by League members for endorsed plays; but the response was careless and vague. Because of unfair statements that were made during the season, and especially at the time of the Irish Players' engagement, a canvas of play attendance has recently been made. The data gleaned is significant and illuminating. Over 2,000 notes of inquiry were sent to Chicago members only, 678 of whom have answered. Their replies show that tickets to the number of 17,182 were purchased for bulletined plays by or through these 678 persons. Many others outside the League were influenced, but the number is impossible to compute. Since figures speak the truth, this is a striking refutation of the criticism that there has been lack of League support for bulletined plays.

However, the test is only partial, for two reasons: First, it covers less than one-fourth the Chicago membership. Second, there was no attempt to make inquiry of the affiliated membership of 7,000, which has had almost all the bulletins. Then, too, we have been unable to cover the posting places. Bulletins are now conspicuously displayed in Universities, in Libraries, in the Art Institute, and in men's clubs and women's clubs to the number of one hundred. Those who see and read these bulletins must far outnumber those who are reached by the mailing list.

We have never been afraid to put ourselves to the open test as regards the question of whether the play-going bulletins stimulate play attendance. It is clear that League assistance is not to be despised by any theatre manager.

One hundred and fifteen is an approximate estimate of the number of plays, exclusive of musical comedy, produced in Chicago thus far this season in the theatres in the loop district. Of these the committee has officially covered forty-eight, not counting each play of two long repertory engagements. Seventeen bulletins have been issued, as against fourteen last season; and seventeen plays is as many as the average play-goer attends. If, then, you have confidence in the committee's judgment, and choose its selection of plays, you will be certain of seeing the best plays each season. The com-

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mittee may now and then fail (it is not infallible) to bulletin a play that would interest you; but we can safely promise that you will never be asked to see a worthless play.

Words and letters of commendation for the work seldom see the light. Only adverse criticism is given publicity. But the former so far outweigh the latter that the committee is heartened and not discouraged.

Mrs. Alice C. D. Riley, organizer of the little circle of drama lovers which grew into the Evanston Drama Club, and then into the National Drama League, spoke in part as follows:

"The object of the bulletin has sometimes been misunderstood. It is not an effort to rival or displace the dramatic critics, who must notice all plays and make some comment on good and bad. The bulletin deals only with those which seem to your committee worth consideration for some quality in either form or content which is above the general run of the commonplace. Its main purpose is to get you to the theatre to support the play bulletined. It is simply a means to an end—an instrument to move the organized audience. Nevertheless, the committee cannot be indifferent to the fact that the bulletin should do its fair share of the educational work. The present form, with tabulated headings, has been developed with this in view. Go to bulletined plays a while and see why they have been chosen for your attention. Remember that Theodore Thomas did not build up the audience for the Symphony concerts in one year, nor in two. Be patient in waiting for results. And meanwhile do your part in helping the cause."

In the discussion which followed, one of the speakers was Mr. Clayton Hamilton, dramatic editor of *Everybody's* and *The Bookman*. He said: "We are glad to know that the Drama League is not trying to cut a slice out of the public, but to harmonize

it. It is proceeding sanely and sensibly, and meeting deserved approval at every point. Other similar attempts by people outside, not inside, the theatre—pulling against it and not with it—have been ill advised and extraneous. When ‘Kindling’ appeared in New York, an office boy was thought competent to report it. The play languished and nearly died, until, by the advice of two or three experts, it was sent to Chicago in hope that the Drama League might rescue it. The success which it has achieved is due in great measure, as the management take pleasure in acknowledging, to the effect of the bulletins. At present it is being followed on the road by reprinted bulletins.”

Professor S. H. Clark, of the University of Chicago, member of the local Playgoing committee, gave his experience in attending an inferior play by a well known and usually skillful playwright. The committee, finding they could not conscientiously bulletin the play, returned home in despair, only to read in next morning’s paper a glowing account of the performance by a professional critic. Momentarily staggered, they finally declared themselves loyal to their own high standards. It is better to take the chance of failing to commend something fine than to let down the bars and endorse something unworthy.

Professor Burrill, of Northwestern University, another member of the local committee, advised going to some plays that are not bulletined, if only to compare them with plays that are bulletined.

Miss Hunt said: “In some good time coming, I hope a few plays out of each season may be bulletined by the Playgoing committee, and also outlined for study by the Educational committee. Then, if League members would in case of each of

these plays first see it on the stage, then read and discuss it in the various affiliated clubs and classes—then see it on the stage again, and then read it again—we should thus coördinate all lines of influence. Furthermore, there would be a general illumination of ideas equal to a torchlight procession."

In the reports of the Secretary and the Treasurer two interesting facts were given: Since the League was founded, 600,000 pieces of literature have been mailed to members; and during the last year the amount in the treasury has increased from less than \$200 to nearly \$3,000.

Many of the addresses which were intermingled with the reports might fairly be called brilliant. The distinguished men who came from far and near to attend the convention were too practical and too much in earnest to think of making phrases; but they made them, nevertheless, and the official report is full of quotable passages.

The two most optimistic statements that were made during the League sessions should be given. Mr. Williams, who has been at the head of a night stand for a quarter of a century, said: "If I could have a vote of my theatre patrons on the best play of the present year, I am sure they would vote almost unanimously for "Kindling," which we played this month with considerable success—due largely to the endorsement of the League. This shows a marked improvement in the taste of the same community twenty-five years ago, when some robustious melodrama or farce would have borne the palm."

Miss Houston remarked that the fact that the theatre season now drawing to a close has been the most disastrous financially in a generation is a reason, not for discouragement, but rather for great

encouragement. It indicates an awakening on the part of the public. The unrest, the dissatisfaction with present conditions, presage change and mean progress.

These are worth quoting, since the optimism of those who know always outweighs the pessimism of those who do not know.

Mr. Hamilton, of Columbia, in his Wednesday evening address, said: "Here in America, where we see the faint glimmerings of dramatic art, we have as yet no great dramatic critics. Such a one cannot analyze until he sees—until we have great plays. In London, where criticism is rising as an art, we have Walkley, Bernard Shaw, abler even as critic than creator, and William Archer, honest and sincere."

Professor Papot, of the Chautauqua Institution, said: "In order to get a national drama, you must have a national spirit behind it. Not until an American gets the 'feel' of the whole country will there be a national masterpiece. The Drama League ought to make it its business to enlighten the multitude, and give them a conception of what drama really is. The public will not be interested until they know something about the drama, and feel a personal relation to it. No matter how good a play may be, it is nothing until it becomes true and gets a response. Americans need the Latin responsiveness to counteract their Saxon stolidity."

Professor Dickinson, of the University of Wisconsin, who made the principal address Wednesday afternoon, said: "Plays must be produced to get the spirit of the conversation. The theatre is the place to investigate plays. A play is not a play until produced, when it attains its individuality.

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So the published play is not doing its full work for drama if it is causing the public to study the book and not attend the theatre. No reading of criticism can take the place of seeing the play. There must be completeness of tone, color, word, and sound."

Dr. Burton, of the University of Minnesota, said: "The literary quality of a play need not be rhetorical. But we must demand some idea of life, for every piece of literature worth while has an idea concerning life." He further pointed out how greatly the pleasure of playgoing may be intensified by study of the technique of drama, citing in example the greater enjoyment of a sonnet that is felt by the reader who understands its structure. The technique of the play, and even the technique of the presentation of the play, should be more completely understood.

Mr. Frederick Koch, Professor of Dramatic Literature in the University of North Dakota, spoke of the relation between universities and the people, in furthering the cause of good drama. He said that all large universities in the country now have courses in drama, and many of them also have dramatic associations which are laboratories for the study of drama, giving practice in presentation and appreciation of dramatic masterpieces old and new. To see on the stage the plays that are studied is a great benefit, while the value to the students who take part is something which we are slow to comprehend. Many of them for the first time see literature as life, and "life in progression," while the ethical value of acting—of living temporarily the life of another—is greater than we realize.

Before adjournment the following officers and directors were elected for 1912-1913:

**DRAMA LEAGUE CONVENTION 113**

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It is a pleasure to turn, if only for a moment, to the Shakespeare festival which was held in Lincoln Park on Tuesday of convention week. A long article, not to say an illustrated volume, would be needed to describe it, and to comment upon the far-reaching good influence of the research work and essay writing which were done in connection with it. Eighteen hundred public school children, taking the

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part of characters in Shakespeare's plays, and clad in costumes of their own making, assembled to lay flowers and scrolls at the foot of Shakespeare's statue, while 30,000 spectators applauded.

Perhaps the most striking culmination was in the Lyric Theatre three weeks later, when Sothern and Marlowe gave a performance of "The Merchant of Venice" to the children of the festival. On that afternoon, Shakespeare's characters filled the house as well as the stage. Never in the world was Shakespeare acted before such an audience.

But a few of the more lasting results may also be mentioned. The event related in harmonious work for the League many different interests: The Board of Education, the Art Institute, the Libraries, Parents and Teachers' Associations, actors, dramatic critics, club women, the Municipal Art League, florists, and department stores.

A permanent interest in Shakespeare's plays was undoubtedly stimulated, and many young leaguers were trained for future service. It is also hoped that there will be increased interest in pageants, and that the large scale of this celebration may not discourage those who for any reason wish to arrange a pageant on a smaller scale. The beautiful scenario prepared by Mrs. Riley is very adaptable, and can be used in various ways.

**ELIZABETH R. HUNT.**

## THE PAST DRAMATIC SEASON IN AMERICA

URING the dramatic season which is now in retrospect, the usual moan went up from managers over the disastrous conditions of their business. It was properly stage-set to the spectacle of so many legitimate stars taking to vaudeville, so many sterling players compelled to sit idle, so many road companies stranded, so many pieces withdrawn after a few night's unhappy trial, such an increasing tide of the unfortunate roadsters making toward New York, that Mecca of success and stepmother of failure. It may be readily granted that the season was a bad one financially, while discounting a little the pessimism of a profession made up of emotional as well as lovable folk, inclined by nature to make much of present ill weal or woe. It may be even suspected that, in the main, it was the poor drama that failed, not sterling plays deserving a better fate. In mid-season, in New York, one who tried to get seats for any one of half a dozen of the best things offered, was unable to secure anything worth while. The moral is obvious.

As to causes, nobody seems quite to know. The unsettled state of business during the political unrest might be an all sufficient explanation, were it not for the curious fact of human psychology: that human beings when hard up or in the very throes of disaster, demand amusement more avidly than ever. A week after the San Francisco disaster, Bernhardt played in the Greek Theatre in Berkeley, across the Bay, to an audience which at two dollars

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or more a seat packed the place, whose seating capacity is eight thousand. Yet a few days before leading citizens stood in the bread-line like common hoboes. Overproduction to fill too numerous play-houses may come into the argument; also automobiles in outdoor weather, and motion picture shows all the time. Again, the difficulties with ticket speculators in New York may possibly affect results in that theatrical centre, though hardly applying to the country at large. In any case, seven new theatres are announced for the autumn opening in the metropolis.

Another cause is perhaps mentioned less frequently than it deserves to be: the fact that, slowly but surely, a theatre audience is being trained which discriminates between good and bad and knows the gradations of what lies between. With too many theatres on their hands, managers rush an imperfectly rehearsed and sleazy piece into a house to prevent its going dark, and the public stays away,—very properly. Curiously enough, the public also stays away from some worthy dramas and lets them die untimely; perhaps misled by their titles or wearied of that windy wonder, the injudicious "advance" man, or disgusted by stupid or vicious dramatic criticism. The whole question is infinitely complex, hard to clear up; but at least I do sincerely believe that a factor in the too frequent failures, though not a deciding one, is the more critical attitude of the typical American audience, which has at last begun to waken from its long Rip Van Winkle sleep of ignorance on what really constitutes a good play.

In a field so vast and varied, where new entertainments are numbered by the hundreds and the activities represent millions of dollars, the first impres-

sion is that of confusion worse confounded. Perhaps the first noticeable thing in the season of 1911-12 is the variety of the offerings. From Shakespeare and Ibsen to "Excuse Me" and "The Greyhound," the extremes were wide apart and much lies between them; you paid your money and took your choice. One heard talk to the effect that it was comedy or melodrama or farce or morality play the public wanted; but current stage history certainly justified no such sapient remark. It looked very much as if the public—meaning the fifty publics which maintain our democratic drama—wanted above all a good play and cared little as to the kind: whether it was scenic in "The Garden of Allah," romantic in "Kismet," spiritual in "The Return of Peter Grimm," childly sweet in "Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm" and "Little Women," homely human with a fresh locale in "Bunty Pulls the Strings,"—and so forth. I doubt if a lesson can be drawn from these and other successes, other than to say that various sorts of plays appealing to entirely different aspects of life, and well done in their kind withal, are pretty sure of their clientèle.

Of no great significance, I take it, was the apparent predeliction towards plays of exotic appeal, such as "The Garden of Allah," "Kismet" and "The Bird of Paradise," save that it was wholesome notification to those concerned that theatre-goers like something besides grey realism. Evidently, with the vast horde of those who make our playhouses prosperous, there is a place for pieces like "Paid in Full" and "Bought and Paid For," but not to the exclusion of the high color, Orient charm and violent romantic challenge of a "Sumurun." There is no reason to believe that the Far East will in the coming season be more in vogue

except it be a motive forced beyond its proper prominence by managerial indiscretion. After all, plays like "The Garden of Allah" and "Kismet" do not make a strictly dramatic appeal; their attraction is other, albeit strong. They are welcome as adding variety to our stage, but hardly symptomatic in any deep sense; in fact, the only one of them to be taken seriously as a play was "The Bird of Paradise."

A tendency of cheerful portent was the steady and increasing preference for drama of native material. The foreign failures were more frequent than ever. The difficulty to secure success met by so distinguished and capable an artist as Madam Simone is a case in point. Plays like "Bought and Paid For," "The Only Son," "Rebellion" and "Kindling" illustrate the remark and were certainly among the most promising features of a situation so complex. And these native plays were as a rule wholesome in motive and handling. Indeed, it may be questioned whether the season can show a marked success in the case of drama of salacious sort, when said play is detached from the drawing power of a star. On the other hand, many well liked and prosperous pieces, such as "When Bunty Pulls the Strings," "The Return of Peter Grimm," "Little Women," "Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm" and "Disraeli" were, with whatever individual differences, alike in the legitimate appeal they made upon interest. It has been demonstrated long before this season that while American theatre-goers will not necessarily support a poor play of good morality, they very much prefer a well-made play of sound ethics rather than the reverse; nay, sometimes, apparently, for the sake of its seeming lesson, welcoming a pseudo-morality piece like "Everywoman," even as earlier an honest one, "Everyman," was warmly received.

Recent dramatic history teaches nothing more plainly than this.

Nor by dramas of morality do I mean plays which choose in a lady-like fashion to talk about a few carefully selected aspects of life, giving the tabu to the rest of life, no matter how vital. Rather is meant drama of honest intent, earnest thought, and helpful, true interpretation of humanity; plays like "The Easiest Way," "Rebellion" and "Kindling." That a piece like the last-named could be rescued from failure and preserved for what looks like an established success by the devoted efforts of a few critics and literary men in New York, is one of the most encouraging denotements of the past season.

The inclination to experiment both with subjects and forms was another thing noteworthy. It was closely connected with various attempts to get away from the commercial theatre and offer good entertainment for those whose taste demanded such fodder. Thus, for example, The Little Theatre in New York made it possible to see so original a one-act piece as Mr. Kennedy's "The Terrible Meek," a serious, high-minded play shamefully mistreated by many newspapers. The Toy Theatre in Boston, a semi-professional organization, permitted local audiences to witness some of the most interesting and able one-act dramas of the day, and its emphasis upon this form of amusement raises the reasonable hope that the one-act piece may yet have its due place in our legitimate theatres; the place it has long occupied abroad. The increasing habit of offering such dramas in vaudeville, it may be added, is a movement in the same direction.

And still thinking of organized attempts at dramatic entertainment, the Chicago Theatre Society continued the work begun some five or six years ago,

in the New Theatre, and their company, The Drama Players, is expected to have another interesting repertory next season. The intention is announced by Maurice Browne of starting this autumn a Little Theatre, following the New York initiative. The work of Hull House is also a factor steadily to be reckoned with; as I write, performances of Galsworthy's "The Pigeon" are imminent. One hears, too, of the resumption of New York's Children's Theatre, interrupted by the illness of the director, Miss Herts.

Looking to the influences calculated to bring thoughtful and critical folk to the playhouse, it should be noted that in no preceding year have so many plays in English speech, and so many foreign dramas in English translation, appeared in book form. The publishers are now turning out dramas with a vigor almost tallying with their earlier activities in fiction. It must be that with all this supply of drama, which can be read and studied in connection with seeing the same plays in many cases enacted in the playhouse, a critical habit of judging, comparing and properly enjoying drama will steadily increase in this country. Together with this fact may be set an affiliated one: the rapid growth of books and manuals technically considering play-making as a craft. The appearance in the spring of William Archer's fine treatise is an illustration. There is now no dearth of helpful literature for those who wish seriously to study dramaturgy as a practical human activity. And Professor Baker's much-mentioned class in play-making at Harvard is but a phase of the same thing. The creation of the desired intelligent theatre audience of the future will surely be aided by all such agen-

cies, and the season under view has done more than its share.

The steady growth of the motion picture houses is a phenomenon which every year makes more evident. The galleries of the regular theatres, we are told, are decimated, might indeed almost as well be closed; and this is a serious menace to the financial welfare of the theatre. The argument often heard to the effect that this new phase of the amusement business cuts into the legitimate playhouses would have more force if high-class theatres showed more definite signs of drawing in their horns; and if the galleries, on inspection, really presented a straggling appearance. As a matter of fact, my own observation of gallery conditions does not point to any noticeable diminution in attendance on plays naturally attractive to the gods who sit on high. They do not patronize Ibsen in large numbers; but would not have done so had motion pictures never been heard of. Then, too, as to theatres in general, one hears constantly of the erection of new and expensive edifices for this purpose, and the policy seems to be one of expansion rather than retrenchment. It may be true, as commonly reported, that the one night stands suffer because of the increasingly poor offerings they are forced to accept. Yet this implies longer runs in the cities by plays of the better sort; and also suggests a more critical taste than before on the part of the outlying towns, where the gradual elimination of inferior drama in this way should in time work only to the advantage of plays and playgoers alike.

In the slow but sure work of educating theatre audiences to discriminate in their choice of entertainment, and, still more ambitious, in the attempt to inculcate some knowledge of the fundamental

principles of sound play-making, the labor of The Drama League of America must receive due meed, since the success of this organized effort to help theatre conditions has been marked, its second year of activity definitely affecting the drama season we are reviewing. Asked today to what he attributes the good fortunes which have attended upon "Disraeli," Mr. Arliss would reply, "to the early advocacy of the drama in the bulletins of the League at a time when such backing was most needed."

And similarly, the management of that sterling piece of uncompromising realism, "Kindling," would no doubt testify gratefully to the assistance rendered by the League when the play went on the road after a Chicago appearance, through advance information in favor of the drama sent by the League to fifteen of twenty-three one night stands where it was to play.

I believe our active playwrights, especially those younger and fast coming to the fore, should have the courage of their convictions and do whatever they feel moved to do, relying upon a plain notification on the public's part that "the play's the thing," and not any particular sort of play. The point is worth making, with the past season in view, because of frequently heard assertions as to the demand just now for this or that type of drama: farce, light comedy, comedy satiric, melodrama, problem or morality play, a claim is made by somebody for almost any class of play as expressing the mood of the moment. Nothing could be further from the truth. For one thing, there is no dominant mood or preference in the matter; and if there were, it would be a most unsatisfactory guide, even a treacherous one to follow. Aside from a leaning toward American themes, as explained, the public has indi-

cated only a general desire to be amused in a rather more skilful and legitimate fashion than in previous years. Managers who make up their lists of attractions for the coming (and very promising) season on the assumption of meeting half-way a wish on the part of play-goers for a definite form and kind of entertainment, are, it may be feared, laying themselves open to disaster.

Scrutinize the past season's successes, particularly the plays which have lasted through into the spring and summer, and the statement will be seen to be a reasonable one. "Officer 666" may be described as melodramatic farce, "The Greyhound" is melodrama. "The First Lady of the Land" is native history handled with pleasant sentiment. "The Only Son" is pleasing light comedy. "The Rainbow" cleverly combines emotion and humor, "The Typhoon" is a serious drama of tragic import. The play which may fairly be referred to as the most pronounced success of the New York season, "Bought and Paid For," is a sternly realistic drama with comic relief; as we have seen, the appeal of "Kismet," "The Garden of Allah" and "The Garden of Paradise" come under the general denominator of romance. Shakespeare was distinctly strong in the hands of Mr. Mantell, and Mr. Sothern and Miss Marlowe; in fact, it may be doubted if the master dramatist's hold on the public was ever more plainly demonstrated. So true is this that Mr. Faversham plans definitely to enter the Shakespearean field the coming year. The Dickens revival, "Oliver Twist," was warmly welcomed. This is, of course, but a glance, yet it may serve to show the folly of any exclusive statement on theatre preferences, by and large, of the great theatre-going masses,—or, for that matter, of the so-called classes.

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Nor is the playhouse a dead issue during the summer months. As these words are being written, stock companies all over the land in cities of moderate or larger size are purveying drama which is in the main worthy, much of it representative of the best play-making of recent years after the metropolitan vogue is over. Companies, too, like those led by Mr. Greet and Mr. Coburn, are appearing far and wide under pastoral conditions and spreading a knowledge of the Greek and English drama which has stood the test of centuries. From a circular before me I notice that the Coburn Players are giving performances of the Shakespeare plays between late April and early August in more than fifty Normal schools, colleges and Universities of this country. This is an excellent and obviously growing movement, calculated to leaven the lumpishness of much that is less desirable.

In fine, while the dramatic season of 1911-12, like all preceding seasons, had its ups and downs, its many fiascos, its complaints of financial stringency and its regrettable features, ethical and artistic; in the broad view there was much to commend and much to indicate progress. The pessimist who prates about the beautiful past and laments over the poor present is often one who knows very little about either, but prefers to secure an effect of omniscience in this inexpensive manner. The only fair test is the comparative one, and applying it, it is not too much to say that theatrical conditions were never more promising than they are now. Even the Methodist Episcopal Church decided at the great Conference in the spring to drop the word "unchristian" from their rule as to theatre attendance. Much entertainment that is wholesome, recreative,

educational and of sound workmanship is now to be had, if we will but realize it.

The chief task of the immediate future is to train our theatre-goers to such discrimination in choosing their entertainment as shall encourage the good and so cause it to wax and grow. And perceptibly those practically engaged in the theatre business are coming to feel a public sentiment behind them, with higher ideals, and more definite powers of criticism. We may be sure the managers will respond.

RICHARD BURTON.

## THE DRAMATIC YEAR IN PARIS

 **T**HE thinking arises from a point of view. Thinking is also a struggle, therefore it is dramatic. Every philosopher who presents to us the system of his logical constructions has built that system by taking sides in the conflict of his innermost thoughts, therefore I consider the Drama as a highly developed expression of the fundamental power of thinking. From this point of view arise series of deductions which extend the realm of the Drama far beyond the confines of the present dramaturgy so that nothing of what presents itself to our inner or outer perceptions may be excluded from this form of thinking which has become a form of art."

Thus spake Gerhart Hauptmann. On the other hand, we were told in a very able and charming lecture delivered before the Drama League in Chicago that the purpose of the dramatic critic is to bring out "the True, the Beautiful, and the Good" in the Drama. As the True, the Beautiful, and the Good are generally accepted as three points of view of the same thing, it may be that the real purpose of this trilogy is to give the critic an opportunity to dodge. By a very slight twist in meaning, if the scene be true, the critic may condemn on the plea that it is not beautiful, and if it be beautiful, he may yet claim that it is not good.

Be this as it may, it is nevertheless a fact that reporting the Drama of the present day is in itself a highly dramatic undertaking. We are too prone

to forget that whatever the new generation may do is, *per se*, right. If we attempt to move with the time and adopt the point of view of the young generation, we shall be hooted by the old as a traitor and looked askance upon by the young, who, while unable to shake off a certain unwilling respect for age, insist on going their own way, which, they know, is the better way. What a terrific drama Maeterlinck would make out of this situation: Do you see, within the old worn body, the mind, the soul, ever yearning for life and eternal youth, untouched by age, ever growing stronger in its capacity for love, in its ability to receive new impressions, to grasp new points of view, and yet baffled, defeated, repulsed at every turn by young and old alike, because he is a traitor in one camp and an intruder in the other, because he is breaking the law and wishes for what death alone may give! And what a roaring comedy Tristan Bernard would write, depicting the mild, invertebrate dreamer, ready to adopt every new ism or fad and go into rapture over it, ever hurling himself bodily between the cogs of the wheels of time, while his fellow men vainly strive to give him a helping hand and put him out of harm's way!

Perhaps it would be wiser for the reporter on modern plays to confine himself to simply answering the following questions: What did the author want to do? Did he do it? He then would indicate to the prospective reader what he may expect to find. And in so doing, he would render a great service, for the ability of assuming a hundred different points of view creates a sort of dilettanteism which is not without danger. The following survey of the theatrical season 1911-1912 in Paris is unbiased by the art of the comedian and depends

solely upon the reading of the texts. It necessitated the reading of over one hundred and sixty plays, all that were available during the year.

This year England leads the foreign invasion, with "Mr. Pickwick," a burlesque comedy by George Duval and Robert Chavray; "David Copperfield," by Max Maurey, and "Mrs. Warren's Profession," by Bernard Shaw—not to mention a translation of "Jimmie Valentine"—as against one play from Hungary, "The Typhoon," by Melchior Lengyel, and one from Russia, "The Eternal Husband," adapted from Dostoiewsky, by Messrs. Alfred Savoir and Nozière.

Commenting upon his own play, "Mr. Pickwick," Mr. Robert Chavray says:

"It was a great task. Remember, that the novel introduces three hundred and sixty characters, each one of them typical; and that one of Dickens' collaborators took the trouble to calculate that the work of the English novelist offered fifty-six theatrical situations. We used only fourteen or fifteen of these. It took a long time to write the play. Dickens wrote his novel almost without a plan; he was then a young newspaper man and wrote hastily, by the light of a little lamp. We had to sacrifice certain parts and do our best to retain only the essential incidents, sometimes condensing several chapters into one. Finally, you will have an idea of the difficulty of our task when I tell you that my friend George Duval and I wrote the play over five times."

It is a very clever farce, as faithful as possible to the spirit of Dickens, and yet it rivals the wildest vaudevilles of Labiche. Nothing could show more clearly how impossible it is to adapt the essential wit and humor of one country to those of another.

"*Mr. Pickwick*" is very clever and witty and humorous, but, in French, you do not get the full flavor until the sentence is concluded, and then it is too late by the fraction of a second.

"*David Copperfield*" is more intelligible to the French, but it shows much more Max Maurey and much less Dickens. Yet, the success of both plays will undoubtedly bring forth further adaptations from the English novelist.

"*Mrs. Warren's Profession*" introduced Bernard Shaw to the French theater-goers. Mr. Claude-Rogers Max begins thus his analysis of the play:

"We know very little of Mr. Shaw in France; his character seems very strange to us, his conception of the stage is very different from our own; and, finally, it requires a great effort to discover him behind his irony and his paradoxes. The English do not understand a joke; the French, while incessantly joking, fear, above all, to be 'taken in.' Add to this the fact that the author is a militant Socialist! How many causes for distrust!"

The most remarkable thing is perhaps the unanimity of the French critics in claiming that Bernard Shaw did not have the courage to carry out his play to a logical conclusion, and that, logically, Vivian should have accepted her mother's inheritance. Now, there is nothing in Mr. Shaw's wildest utterances that has not been spoken before upon the French stage. Is it not, therefore, plausible that the difficulty experienced by a French audience in understanding him may be due to the greater precision of the French language, and to the habit of demanding an exact statement which this very precision of language has made second nature for the French? We call French plays "talky"; the French find the English plays "lacking in precision." By

a curious coincidence, we had, at the same time, a play—"L'Aigrette"—by Derio Niccodemi which almost parallels "Mrs. Warren's Profession," with this difference, that the woman is a genuine countess, whose only lure is her own son. There can be no complaint about the lack of carrying out this play to its logical conclusion.

"The Typhoon" is well known in this country, but the French version differs from the version acted here in a great many ways. A whole act, the third, representing the court scene, has been omitted in English. Max Lindner, the drunken journalist, does not use the impossible language placed in his mouth in the first act. Helen Kerner is less complex, and the French version gives a much clearer conception of the violent antagonism which exists between Asia and Europe, between the civilization of the extreme East and our own; it evokes much more clearly the image of a first skirmish between the white and yellow races.

More realistic, perhaps, and at any rate more convincing, is "The Honor of Japan." It was after his return from a long sojourn in Japan that Mr. Paul Anthelme conceived the idea of writing a play upon the legend of the "Forty-seven Ronines." To save time, let us quote the prologue spoken by the stage director before the curtain:

"Japan has just astonished the world by its military virtues. It has put a stop to the expansion of the white race. Our intention is to present before you the customs of the feudal times during which these virtues developed. That we may do so, you must grant us the use of two words from that country, which words may be new to many of you. The *samouraïs* were warriors in the pay of great lords. They had the privilege of bearing two swords: the

large one, which was borne by all free men, and a little one, which they used to rip open their own abdomens when they had to commit suicide. The *ronines* were *samouraïs* who had lost their masters or who had left them and led a vagabond life. They were usually distinguished by a peculiarly shaped hat which concealed their faces. The sense of these two words being explained, we hope that our story will be clear to you."

And it is a beautiful story of a nation which keeps on believing that duty is the law of life, and considers that self-sacrifice, including suicide, is the highest expression of the human will. To be master of one's self, in order to be ever ready to do one's duty, is the aim of the Japanese; this is shown by this drama in which *samouraïs* and *ronines* vie in giving us lessons in heroism, in showing us what devotion, faithfulness, and scorn of death may accomplish. It is lofty and barbarous; it makes one wonder how the theory of the True, the Beautiful, and the Good may be applied!

There are several kinds of success, one of which consists in striking a responsive chord in the audience, in the masses. There is a renaissance of patriotism in France, a new awakening of national enthusiasm. There is a revival of energy. It is in the air; you can breathe it even here, across the ocean; it exudes from every line of French literature. This alone would suffice to explain the success of *La Flambée*, by Henry Kistemaekers, for which the American rights were at once secured by Mr. Frohman. A first act of clear, swiftly moving exposition, with three excellent scenes. In the first, Lieutenant-Colonel Pierre Felt takes to task Marcel Beaucourt, a statesman. Both honorable men,

two forces moved by the primeval impulse, the love of a woman, are held in check by civilization:

FELT. So you know that my wife and I have been parted for months by a disagreement for which I alone am to blame. On the other hand I have suddenly become convinced that you took advantage of this disagreement to try to transform Monique's friendly attitude towards you into more tender feelings. You had the right to do so. Our personal relations have always been very cold. You are not betraying a friend, you are coveting the wife of a man who is a stranger to you. Does this seem a fair statement?

BEAUCOURT. This seems to me a rather brutal statement of the very respectful feelings I have for a friend whose moral life is sufficiently disturbed, you admit it yourself, to have need of comfort, affection.

FELT. Beg your pardon! You are again answering me with phrases like a politician. It does not suit me to have you seek refuge in euphemisms! Let us leave aside comfort and affection. You wish to make my wife your mistress.

BEAUCOURT. This is not true!

FELT. Beg pardon?

BEAUCOURT. It is false. It is so false that the very utterance of your thought is unbearable to me.

FELT. Are you so afraid of words?

BEAUCOURT. I am not afraid of words, they wound me.

FELT. Find others! And if you are not wishing to make my wife your mistress, tell me what you want to make of her?

BEAUCOURT. I would tell you if I had the right to. I haven't.

FELT. Take it.

BEAUCOURT. No.

FELT. Because?

BEAUCOURT. Because, by asserting my intentions I would seem to imply her own, and I refuse to implicate her.

FELT. Your reticences are sufficiently clear. So you are planning for my divorce?

BEAUCOURT. It is not my place to answer you.

FELT. What you want is my home. That's all. The woman would not suffice you; you must have marriage.

BEAUCOURT. She must have respect.

FELT. Let's speak of you. The socialist in you would be satisfied with adultery, but your bourgeois conscience as a

radical demands regulation. How I recognize your political creed!

BEAUCOURT. And I your military creed by the scorn you profess for women, even your own, and the way you speak of her, as a booty of war!

FELT. Well, do you know what that fine plan of yours amounts to? It is an imbecile deed—a cowardly deed.

BEAUCOURT. Sir!

FELT. Pardon me. I apologize for having lost my temper. I withdraw the word, but insist on proving the fact. I do not know what Monique may have said to you, I do not know what she thinks, I do not know what she wants—I'll go further, I will even admit that at this moment she hates me, but, what I am sure of, is that she has never ceased to love me—So?

BEAUCOURT. So—what?

FELT. Let us suppose that you succeed.

BEAUCOURT. Yes?

FELT. Your triumph would be but ephemeral. Notwithstanding the harm I have done to Monique, perhaps because of it, I love her deeply, I wish to win her back, and I shall succeed.

BEAUCOURT. Yes?

FELT. I shall, whether she remains my wife or becomes yours. In the last hypothesis your memory will stand between us. So you would have made two beings unhappy and would yourself be the third. You will have taken advantage of a crisis, of an error—a cowardly thing to do! You'll only reap disaster for your pains—An imbecile thing to do! I am not trying to insult you. I am qualifying the facts."

In the second scene, Monique—the pheasant hen of *Chantecler*—gives her version to the Bishop. In the third scene, Golgau—the spy—drives Felt to the wall. The second act, that night, in Monique's bedroom, Felt has killed Golgau. The whole act takes place between Felt and Monique, and the second act of "The Thief" dwindles in comparison with the depths of feeling displayed in the struggle in which Monique returns to her husband. Melodrama? No! Deep, red blood corpuscles, under the magnifying

glass of the psychologist. Not true of the woman, who knows? How many centuries will pass before it is accepted as untrue? There is no way out for the third act that we can foresee, but Mr. Kistemaeckers found one: sacrifice on the part of Beaucourt. And it leaves a wholesome warm glow in the mind, and the pulse beats quicker. Such a play can be spoiled only in the telling. It is now available in book form.

The most striking feature of the past semester is the wonderful activity displayed at the Odéon under the directorship of Mr. Antoine. There was a time, and it is not so very long ago, when the critics and the "boulevardiers" used to make great fun of Mr. Antoine, then director and leading actor of the Théâtre Libre. Mr. Antoine's back was the subject of many witticisms. Nevertheless, he has done more than any other man to introduce rational acting and to open the way for new talent in actors as well as in authors. At the present time, Mr. Antoine is still the leader in this direction; for, on the 10th of December, 1911, he inaugurated upon the stage of what is often called "Le Second Théâtre Français" a series of matinées devoted exclusively to the production of new unpublished plays by authors who have not yet succeeded in gaining a hearing. Since it remains a fact that the ultimate and only real test of a play is its production, no adequate praise can be bestowed upon Mr. Antoine for his daring innovation. It is true that not all the plays thus tried were masterpieces—that was not to be expected—but at least they were all actable, and it is quite possible that one of them may prove the very best thing produced during the semester.

This play—*Les Affranchis* ("The Freedmen")—

the work of a woman, Mlle. Marie Lenéru, is probably the most intellectual drama of the season, and yet is far from being a closet play. Its language is more concise than the language usually employed upon the French stage, but the dramatic side carries the dialogue. If there is such a thing as an honest attempt to see life clearly and scatter sentiments, diving for the truth beneath, we certainly find it in *Les Affranchis*. Let us quote in full the article of Mr. Guy Launay, the eminent critic who writes under the nom de plume of Léon Blum:

The essential characters in Mlle Lenéru's play are: A professor, Philippe Alquier, who is at the same time an estheticist and a philosopher, whose lessons and books have exercised a sort of domination upon his students. His task was at the same time negative and positive. He attempted to discredit the traditional moral values. In the name of reason, he drew up a formidable impeachment against the hereditary conventions which constitute the notions of good and evil. Upon these ruins he erected no new dogmatism. He confined himself to extolling individual energy. He taught, "that we must will all our desires, that our passions, and our passions alone, are the true expression of life and point out to us the aim, if not the road; that our cleverness, eagerness and perseverance in following them up are the only measure of the force and of the value of the soul within us."

His wife, Marthe Alquier, a simple and kind woman, in no way devoid of perspicacity, straightforward in mind and in heart. Philippe married her, thirteen years before, without love and because he considered marriage suitable to that period of his life. They lived side by side, without worries and not without tenderness, and all this past of common trust goes to give Marthe a feeling of security which, for her, is happiness.

A young girl of twenty, Helen Schlumberger, keen, ardent, alive with all the quivering of a virgin soul in the presence of life, had taken her first vows in a Cistercian convent, of which Sabine Lasson, Marthe Alquier's elder sister, was mother superior. But the Cistercian convents, like all others, have just been closed in France by the government. So,

Sabine Lasson withdrew temporarily to the house of her brother-in-law and took with her, as companion and secretary, Helen Schlumberger, her preferred pupil. Helen had not yet taken the final vows, she was not yet a nun, but when the action begins she still retains a heartfelt faith in the contemplative life she had selected.

Such are the three actors of the drama. Soon, a passion, purely abstract and intellectual at its origin but all powerful nevertheless, develops between Philippe and Helen. She experiences the boundless admiration of the pupil for the master. He finds in her a kindred intellect. This intimacy grows freely for the reason that it takes nothing from Marthe, that the man concedes and the woman occupies a place which Marthe had left empty of her own free will.

Once the intimacy is established, other factors creep in, unknown to them. Helen is a virgin and Philippe has never known love. He says: "I found in her the eyes, the glances of our best young men, true intelligence and the anxious attention of those who understand. I learned to know the enjoyment a leader full of prestige finds near a valuable aide de camp. And they were the eyes of a woman, of a being that is promised us—the breath of her speech came from lips which await our kisses."

This being established, how will Philippe and Helen act under the influence of this mutual passion, the importance of which equals the importance of their very lives? How will the master and the pupil react, being granted that they are as "free" one as the other? What will they choose, self sacrifice or cruelty? Will they become heroes, executioners or cowards?

This conflict has often been presented before, but here, the problem is presented in such a manner that none of the usual solutions may be selected. What usually opposes passion in conflicts of this kind, what triumphs over it, is either pity, the fear of the suffering it will cause, or the feeling of duty. In this case, neither Philippe nor Helen are stopped for a moment by the consideration of the suffering Marthe may experience. Marthe is not in love with Philippe; she is a good mother, a good wife, in the "bourgeois" sense of the word, and nothing more. Or, at least, she was nothing more at the beginning of the crisis. If Philippe were to become Helen's lover, to abandon her for Helen even, Marthe's grief would not be everlasting. The children are not any

stronger an obstacle. Philippe loves his children fairly well, but he knows that he is not a necessity to them.

As to the feeling of duty, that is a senseless word, as well for Philippe as for Helen. Both would be capable of sacrificing themselves, even their very lives, but they see no reason for sacrificing themselves, "for administrative purposes only and for the good order of the common wealth." Philippe, who is urged by his friend Réal to give up Helen, replies, "Find a valid reason and I'll request my sister-in-law to take Helen away at once." Within the measure in which the word duty has a sense for those "Free minds," it would urge them towards the consummation of the act. The exaltation of their vital powers, the development of their personal perfection lies in that direction. They are for each other what makes life richer and more beautiful. And the true morality in their eyes consists in respecting this eventuality, the possible extension of themselves. The true moral crime would be to renounce it, to discard "all these possibilities which surround us, graze us in their flight, which may become ourselves, the best of ourselves, and which will never be."

Thus, there is no valid motive to oppose the union of Philippe and Helen. And yet, it will not take place. Why? Because they cannot, because it "won't do"; because, as Mlle. Lenéru states in one of the first scenes, "We never act as we think, not even as we feel; we act as we can."

Mlle. Lenéru's thesis is Spinozian. The individual, whatever may be his doctrines or his beliefs, cannot escape his surroundings. The equilibrium of his surroundings triumphs over him. His ideas may become free from it, his instincts will keep on obeying it. It is a question of statics. And it shows the vanity of the controversies we have undergone during the last fifteen years concerning the danger of Nietzscheism to civilization. When placed personally before a question of life or death, man obeys no preconceived morality, but laws of equilibrium of a purely physical character as compelling as those of gravity. The moralities of greed are no more effective in this case than the moralities of renouncement. They will remain inoperative as long as they remain the moralities of an elite and have not modified the whole equilibrium of the social surrounding.

And by what means is the surrounding equilibrium to prevail over Philippe and Helen? By rather subtle means, for the modes of action of natural fatality vary with the quality

of the beings to be influenced. At the very moment when Helen and Philippe decide to belong to each other in spite of Marthe, in spite of everything, Helen discovers:

That traditional growth has developed within her a so exclusive and exacting conception of love that she could not bear to become the mistress or the wife of the man who first was Marthe Alquier's husband;

That her virginal purity, her Christian passionate modesty, which are a product of the same conventions, are the predominating element of the desire and of the very love of Philippe.

And thus does fatality, which was not able to oppose boldly this illicit passion, succeed, in a roundabout way, in sapping it at its very roots. As soon as Helen perceives this two-fold truth and voices it, the "emancipated freedmen" return to the yoke. All that is needed is for the mother superior to step in, as a matter of form, in the name of social necessities, of the rules of order and habit of which she is the symbol, and wave the standard of tradition over a victory already won. It is because Helen was a Christian that her desire for love remained so imperious and so unyielding, and through this, she ruined her own love. She served the obscure purposes from which she thought to be free. Could it be otherwise? The mother superior had warned us in one of her first speeches: "Strange as it may seem to you, it was not the fearful and timid girls who remain with us. When there are no more convents for our daughters I know of some whom it will embarrass you greatly to deal with in society."

The success of *Les Affranchis* was so great that Mr. Antoine produced a second play, by Mlle. Lenéru, *Le Redoutable*, on the 22d of January, 1912.

Beside this, on the 8th of February, Mr. Antoine produced "Esther, Princess of Israel," by Messrs. André Dumas and Sébastien Charles Leconte. "Esther" is as well known to us as "Athalie," and when Racine's tragedy was presented before the young ladies of St. Cyr, on the 26th of June, 1689, Mme. de Sévigné wrote:

"I cannot tell you how I enjoyed this play: the subject is not easy to present and will never be imi-

tated. The relation of music, verses, songs, and characters is so complete that it cannot be improved."

Mme. de Sévigné wrote this before the appearance of Higher Criticism and Historical Researches. She did not realize what foreign critics soon pointed out: that Racine's heroes all belonged to the 17th century, whatever may be their names. In "Esther, Princess of Israel," we have an attempt at a true presentation of the Biblical story, without any softening of its sensuality, brutality, and horrible climax. From the description, as well as from the pictures, the stage is a learned reproduction of the splendors of Susa or Ecbatana. Music by the Colonne orchestra charms the ears, and costumes, and also, perhaps, the lack of them, charm the eyes; and yet this tremendous combination does not overshadow the tragedy, or rather the drama, which abounds in virile and lyric passages and resounding lines, well in keeping with the murderous frenzy which permeates the whole play, with no softening touch in bringing out the conflict of Jewish and pagan philosophy. It would be very difficult to recognize Racine's soft and tender creature, who kneeled in prayers for inspiration in the voluptuous and sanguinary heroine presented by Messrs. Dumas and Leconte.

While masterpieces are rare, it often happens that plays, which as a whole are far from being masterpieces, contain scenes of great force and beauty. This is the case in "Happiness," a comedy in three acts, by Mr. Albert Guyon (Théâtre Antoine, Nov. 3). It is not a pleasant play; it is another brutal psychological study, the morality of which consists in this: it logically denudes passion of all its glamour, and, having uncovered the skeleton

shows it up for what it is worth. In this play we have a contented husband, an ardent lover, a very calm lover, and a woman. The husband dies. Colette, the woman, is about to marry the ardent lover. The latter's father announces to him that if this marriage takes place, he will not give him a cent. Then comes the scene in which Réné and Colette "have it out":

COLETTE. Dare to contradict me! Dare! What! you were the first to utter the word egotism, and now you are afraid of the sense that you discover in it? No! No! You haven't any choice, you must admit the whole of it! Oh! you feel that we are coming to the utmost depth of baseness! I know! I know! We are above the question of money, aren't we? We shouted it aloud a little while ago, and perhaps we were sincere, but in spite of what we might say, the first condition of a love like ours is money! If we were afraid of being poor, this might be excusable. But we are afraid of not being rich, and that is degrading!

RENE. Colette!

COLETTE. Why do you protest? I didn't say, "you are afraid"; I said, "we are afraid." That is perhaps the only point on which we agree, but since you do protest, listen: As long as we were lovers, you lived with your father, you had the benefit of his vast fortune, so you found, outside of me, all the pleasures of a rich man's existence—do you hear that—outside of me! Do you understand that I was only one pleasure more added to the others. You took me as a treasure trove—for good measure as it were! As for me, I lived freely on what my husband left me, without calculation and without care. You simply brought me an agreeable sensation which was lacking to my personal comfort. Take it all in all, I sacrificed nothing to you—and cost you nothing. That's why we loved each other.

RENE. Colette! Enough, I beg of you! I said I would marry you and I shall marry you. What opinion do you have of me?

COLETTE. You could say nothing harsher than this simple phrase which is the phrase of an honest man. So, in your eyes, I represent duty! Already?

RENE. I am not analyzing any longer. It is a question of honor!

COLETTE. I was waiting for that! I felt it coming! But it's only a word—let it pass! Only, let me ask you this: Why did we wish to marry?

RENE. To be able to love each other more freely, more—

COLETTE. Oh! you can lie better than we can! If we had foreseen that marriage would reduce us to a medium standard of living should we have decided to marry?

RENE. But—

COLETTE. Your hesitation is your answer! No! No! we should not have wished it! While on the contrary—and you know it also—all our differences in tastes, habits and characters would not prevent us from marrying if we were to be rich! Thus, as ever, as everywhere, money would be the ransom.

RENE. So, in our relations money might, if need be, take the place of love; but love cannot take the place of money. That's what you have come to say. If so—what is our love?

COLETTE. What's the good of trying to find out? Let's keep at least that illusion.

RENE. No! No! Having reached the point we have reached, there is an atrocious pleasure in searching the depths of our souls and sparing nothing! How little this love is worth which procured us such great joys if it did not even soften our hearts.

It is a long scene, a gruesome scene, but it is without a vestige of hypocrisy.

Fortunately, all of this season's plays are not of this kind. A large proportion of them conform to the moral, religious, and ethical notions prevailing at the present time or at least differ from them so little or in such a concealed way that no objections are raised, and some are very interesting plays at that.

Chief among them is "Primerose," by G. A. Cailavet and Robert Flers (Comédie Française, Oct., 1911).

Primerose is a charming girl; she acts as a nurse in the morning and in the evening sings popular

songs. The contrast is rather sharp, but charming, and she herself considers that the two go very well together. She never conceals anything she does and never does anything without having thought about it: there has not been in her life a single action which she did not weigh. At the age of twenty-four she had already refused a number of suitors; she loves a man who loves her. She has often wished to speak to him, but she is so much in love with her love that she cannot make up her mind to express it in words. She hides it, hushes it with a sort of pride; she lives with her secret and clasps it to her heart. Pierre, who loves her, is timid and says nothing, and it is she who has the candid audacity of writing to him, "I love you!" When he offers to shake hands with her, she slips into his the little note she has kept clutched in her own for an hour. She closes his fingers upon it and he looks astonished. Then she says to him: "I am going to leave you. Promise me that you will not read this until you can no longer hear my voice." He promises, and she goes away singing.

She doesn't love in the way she sees other people love. She is not one of those changeable women. When she hears a man or a woman of her own social group say, "I have loved," she does not understand what it means. How is it possible to have loved and to love no more?

But, as Pierre, overjoyed, was about to tell her of his love, he learns that his fortune is gone, and considers it his duty to tell her that he does not love her. He departs for America. Primerose enters the convent. She had no mother and had the sad misfortune of meeting evil in her surroundings before she knew that it existed. She cannot remain with people she despises. The convent

makes her perfectly happy. There is peace there, and there she finds again her youthful gaiety, her laughter, her happiness, her childish soul—she retains a tinge of coquetry. She sings in the chapel, and, without wishing to do so, has great success. She is never tired, never discouraged; she is so busy even that, on two Sundays, she didn't have time to go to church, which had never happened before she became a sister. She does not suffer. For her, a crown of thorns is only a wreath of roses from which the roses have fallen. And so, there is no more Primerose; she died one evening after the ball. Pierre returns. It seems to Primerose that the remembrances he evokes are those of another person, and she thinks that it is harmless to speak to Pierre, since Pierre and she were both friends of Primerose. Pierre becomes more pressing; she listens to him as one listens to some one in pain, she pities him with all her heart, she smiles because she shall cure him and she will pray to God every day that Pierre may forget her. She is wonderfully happy. She enjoys a happiness which cannot change, which cannot end, and in two months she will take her final vows. But there is a charming bishop who points out to her that she is not yet bound, that the convent has been secularized, and who finally overcomes her stubbornness. It is all very sweet and very plausible.

Quite remarkable is the number of charming bishops who have appeared upon the French stage during the last year. Whenever any moral and ethical arguments are to be brought forward, it seems to be absolutely necessary to place them in the mouth of a bishop. Some sixty years ago we found the same arguments spoken by very different characters indeed.

Now we have been told in the pages of this very magazine that the test of a play is its plausibility. To offset this statement we have the absolutely impossible and delightful *Un Bon Petit Diable* ("A Good Little Scamp"), a fairy tale in three acts, by Mme. Rosemonde Gérard (Rostand's wife) and Maurice Rostand, his son. It is needless to say that neither wife nor son could escape from Rostand's influence, and that reminiscences from *l'Aiglon*, *Cyrano*, and *Chantecler* abound. The excess of virtuosity, the superabundance of wit, is forgiven because of an indescribable atmosphere of kindness and tenderness, of playing upon a chord that is never played upon in vain. And it is not a mawkish sentimentality, either; but, under the glitter of the verbal expression, there is a freshness, a youthfulness, a naive idealism which for the time being overcomes reason, scepticism, criticism, and philosophy. Stage technique has gone by the board, the supernatural exists. Poetry becomes the mother tongue and it grasps and captivates.

Mme. Rostand is quoted in the *Figaro* as saying:

We wished to put upon the stage a story that would arouse the sensibility of the children and stimulate their imagination, bring chosen pictures before their eyes and awaken all that is delicate and pretty in their little souls. In short, if we do not make them laugh with music, we wished to make them laugh with poetry. Is this such an unrealizable ambition? Is it not permissible to try to tinge with poetry the obscure feelings which move within them, the general concepts which are accessible to them and by poetizing them bring them to their consciousness? Is it forbidden to cause them to think by some other method than by giving them lessons, and to point out to them some of the roads towards kindness, wisdom, tenderness and honesty without warning them that the roads are being pointed out? Can we not lead them towards life without reciting a homily to them? And also, if we must confess all, we wish to teach them to love

poetry; to love it, not as an acquirement, in a bookish sort of a way, but as an eternal, tender, warm and throbbing voice, the voice of life, to which all forces of the soul may joyfully yield. Yes, that is indeed the clearest intent we had—to make them laugh by making them love poetry. If we succeed in making them laugh, we ask nothing more.

*Un Bon Petit Diable* does that, not only for children, but for all grown-ups who have not lost the power of throwing off the yoke of reason and pessimism and analytical introspection and may yet yield to a heart appeal, which, after all, is the case of ninety-nine out of a hundred.

It would scarcely be fair to omit mentioning Mr. Lucien Népoty's delightful play, *Les Petits*, in which we find a new insight into the mental attitude of the children. Children have had very little attention from playwrights so far. It would be hard to name more than a half dozen plays dealing mostly with their problems, and *Les Petits* will take a prominent place among them.

Now for the great literary event of the year, *Le Ménage de Molière* ("Molière's Household"), by Maurice Donnay, played for the first time on the 11th of March, 1912, at the Comédie Française, a comedy in five acts and six settings, in verse—a great work, by a great dramatic writer. During 1910-11, Mr. Donnay delivered a series of lectures upon Molière which, collected in a book, form one of the very best biographies of Molière. Mr. Donnay is thoroughly conversant with his subject and deeply in love with it. He handles French verse with wonderful facility and almost succeeds in accomplishing the impossible. His play, which shows us our greatest comic writer dealing with farce and grotesque comedy while suffering tortures as the husband of a wife whom he adored and who did not

love him, is a psychological comedy written in the classical form. It evolves in a slow and stately motion which leaves ample time for the literary man to relish the fine points, and they are many. But no one has yet attained the swing of Molière's lines. A number of those have been incorporated in the play, more especially in the first act, and no better example of the difference between the classic Alexandrine and the loose Alexandrine of the present day could be given. When, at the very opening, after reading a hundred lines or so of modern verse you strike a quotation of thirty-seven lines by Molière, it produces the same effect as would be experienced if, after being off the track, your car should suddenly strike the track again. And the wonderful part of it is that, until you do get to the quotation, you never realized that jolty feeling. It would take a whole article to point out all that is delightful, and *Le Ménage de Molière* will be a great treat for a few, but the general public of to-day cannot possibly relish it. An audience which goes into raptures over a Bernstein or a Bataille play cannot possibly appreciate *Le Ménage de Molière* and vice versa.

Another French author who certainly deserves a full introduction to the American public is Tristan Bernard, the most prolific and probably the best comic playwright in France at the present day. His last play, *On Nait Esclave* ("We Are Born Slaves") is a most wonderful comedy in three acts built upon a plot so thin as to be barely visible, and yet most convincingly and charmingly told. Here is one play that cannot be given by cinematograph, and while we have learned that drama is not literature, it would be a curious experiment to find what would be left of *On Nait Esclave* if the literature were taken out. Another of Tristan Bernard's plays,

more of a farce than a comedy, however, *Le Petit Café*, is a wonderful example of subtle and delightful humor. If Maeterlinck excels in finding the tragedy of daily life, Tristan Bernard excels in finding its comedy.

BÉNÉDICT PAPOT.

## THE DRAMA OF INTELLECTUALISM

 **T**HIS is a suggestive and thought compelling book.\* Here suddenly we have, after many random essays, a little volume that precipitates values. "Madam, I'm not arguing with you; I am telling you," Ruskin is said to have thundered to a contentious woman. That modern drama has reached the point at which one dares to be dogmatic about it is a significant thing. We might even say that it is a prophetic thing, for in arguing a certain completeness and settled quality in things present it promises change and another order of things to come. One is dogmatic when he has history on his side. He is not dogmatic in the midst of contending issues. So Mr. Dukes' dogmatism on the drama is both significant and prophetic.

"European drama has just reached the end of an odd and experimental, but stirring, period of artistic history," writes Mr. Dukes at the beginning of the book. The rest of the volume bears out the presumption of settled values and formulated standards. Standing with the author we see certain evidences of unity in the activities of recent drama which before have eluded our most careful searching. We are even able, through medium of Mr. Dukes' "polemical and intolerant" judgments, to pluck a little nearer to the heart of the mystery of

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\* "Modern Dramatists," by Ashley Dukes. Charles H. Sergel & Company, Chicago.

one of the most puzzling periods in the records of the stage.

When men sought for a term by which to denominate the new drama of a generation or two ago they called it the drama of ideas. And this term served its purpose very well in calling attention to the particular concern of this type of play with ideas as such and with men as thinking beings. Modern drama is concerned with ideas first and foremost. It has been created out of a world of thought, peopled by speculative mannikins, circumscribed in a technique prescribed by logic, and directed to the understanding. It may safely be said that every great modern play can be stated first in terms of abstract ideas, and only secondarily in terms of personal living. In modern drama life has been reduced to formulas. Now every great drama from Aeschylus to Synge has at its heart a modicum of ideas. It has been characteristic of modern drama to isolate and specify its ideas rather than submerge them and imply them.

This does not mean that modern drama is not artistic. As a matter of fact, this kind of writing is peculiarly appropriate to the spirit of the age. If one were asked what is the prevailing temper of the last fifty years he might fairly answer that it has been a keen and speculative interest in all the phenomena of living. Most of the real activity of this period has been toward the distribution of clear and independent thinking among the many. This intellectual interest in living has become so strong that it has had to be recognized as one of the factors of social existence. He who ignores it is a bad teacher, statesman, or artist. Along with the enfranchising of many minds there has gone forward another process, the separating off of a class who

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live all their lives in the circle of the mind, who value living not as a thing to be experienced, but as a thing of meanings and connotations. The discovery that men had minds as well as wills and passions was a rich one for all art, and especially rich for drama. These new minds, alert, skeptical, questioning, sometimes "sicklied over with the pale cast of thought," have provided the character material out of which modern drama has been made. The hero of the recent drama has been the man who is interested in life as a problem, or who lives his life in thoughts rather than in deeds. It is a significant thing that drama should have been among the first of the arts to reflect this modern intellectual temper.

The influence of the canons of thought in drama of recent times has been thorough and complete. It has governed the choice of themes, and made the stage the debating ground of social problems. It has stipulated the kind of characters to be introduced upon the stage, and has placed there the raisonneurs, the intellectuals, the introspectives, and those vexed with all the problems of mentality. In matters of form it has laid upon drama the control of an extraneous logic, and in the tenets of realism and naturalism has worked out a code of regulations as rigorous and as alien to the pure purposes of art as the rules of the classic French stage.

Characteristic modern drama begins and ends with a formula. It is said that Zola in writing his latest novels always began with a formula implicit in a word, sometimes the title of the book, as *Truth*, *Justice*, *The Earth*, *Fecundity*. If that is the case he was true to his code of an intellectually controlled and inspired art. Certainly the formula is the last thing left in the mind of the reader after the story

is forgotten. In the same way modern drama is expanded from a formula. In the case of most great modern playwrights, from Dumas down, we are not left much room for question whether they are not rather thinkers using the medium of drama than dramatic artists implying an interpretation of life. Taking the titles of Dumas' plays—for instance, "The Money Question," "The Ideas of Madame Aubray"—we must draw the conclusion that here it was the idea that came first in importance. So there can be no doubt that in "Pillars of Society" and in "Ghosts" the idea is the salient thing, the story but subordinate. In the old play ideas are implicit in the action. In the modern play action and life are but implicit in the formula. Often that formula is stated as a proposition. Ibsen takes the idea "the majority is always wrong," and "An Enemy of the People" expounds the thesis. Echegaray evolves a conception of society and writes a prologue to "The Great Galeoto" to show that the play is an exposition of that conception. Pinero's "The Profligate" and "The Second Mrs. Tanqueray" are expositions of Paula's formula "the future is but the past entered through another gate." In a word, the significant progress of dramatic art of the last fifty years has been toward making the drama a better expository medium for the expression of ideas.

It is this thing that Mr. Duke's book so adequately lays before us, and in its own right represents. His work represents the final word of the authority of ideas in art. Writing at the apex of a movement of dramatic positivism, in which the logic of fate may be summed up in Mrs. Gaskell's phrase made fifty years before, "Every deed, however remote, has its eternal consequences," Mr. Duke's book is

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the application to a dogmatic art of a dogmatic criticism. In this book we see represented the standards of the art that is limited to man as a thinking machine. And we see the cogent thinker evaluating his art. We see how this fetish of thought in art has drawn into drama some men who would by no possibility have been dramatists in other days, how it has made great poets turn into poor logicians, and has lifted craftsmen to eminences as leaders of thought. Nothing so clearly indicates the general artistic inadequacy of the drama of thought as this clear statement of its present standards and attainments. In showing what it is, Mr. Dukes has more significantly shown what it is not, and has pointed the way on which the more rounded human art of drama must come.

Realism came not so much from the application of the laws of logic to literature as from their application to life. Realism was a point of view and method of attack. So it was no accident that brought literary realism in at the same time as mental unrest. Every age has its own peculiar search, and it is usually the function of art to give voice to that search. The search that is typical of our time, as Dukes has said, is that of "honest men and women seeking for realities." This is the peculiar flavor of modernity, a search pursued with no less sacred fervor, instinct with no less personal tragedy, because pursued without prejudice and in a spirit of scientific doubt. The questions our age has asked are inner questions. Introspection has ceased to be abnormal in that it has come to be the normal pursuit of truth back to that only center of which we are credibly aware, the center of each searcher's inner consciousness.

Plays which deal with such a theme find their

form prescribed within absolute limits. Ibsen's plays, more than being typical of his time, got their being from his time. They would have been impossible in form and content in any other time. To make a play out of the inner motives of men we must provide characters who are themselves sufficiently interested in their inner motives to bring them to light. Not the character that completes itself in action, or diverts his own self-gropings to other activities, will provide the material of the play of thought. Imagine Rosmer not a dreamer, or Solness not a lonely visionary, and the inner drama of the mind of the reformer and the artist could not be written. In this respect an introspective era has provided for art the expedients that would make its inner meanings vocal.

One aspect of the domination of logic over art has been striking. Art has become the "hand-maiden" of social causes. An art which has been constructed according to the close "logic of events" soon finds itself impressed by that same logic into social service. And then follows that mingling of the issues of art and practical life that has caused a heavy toll to be paid by the artists of the last fifty years. "How much worse for a man would it be were he not a citizen," wrote Dante out of the fulness of his love for Florence. The poets of our day have been led by easy stages from the first alluring logic of reality to the final offering of their art itself on the altar of their citizenship. Kingsley and Ruskin and Morris and Ibsen and Yeats have been honest men searching for reality. Their art pointed out reality for them and straightway as genuine men they tried to build their lives by the art, with what loss to the pure values of beauty no one can say. This is the price that art has paid to its pas-

sion for the realities of science, and this is the price our times have paid in insisting upon the interchangeable values of art and life.

We are coming to the time when we may again ask whether the values of art and life are after all interchangeable, whether art and life should not go their two ways side by side but separate. For there is a spiritual body and there is a temporal body. The white certainty of truth and beauty of the poet is not the logic of the scientist or the program of the reformer. What art needs, says Wilde, is not to study life, but to study art; not to imitate life but to imitate art. We have gone a long way from this thinking in these latter days of art for man's sake. Was it not with something of this feeling that Ibsen came back from his fifteen years of social propagandism to the weary disillusionment of "The Master Builder" and his frank repudiation of the commonplace world in "When We Dead Awaken?"

This mixing of values of art and logic is nowhere seen more clearly than in the case of Hauptmann. Like Morris, Hauptmann is a dreamer of dreams born out of his due time. As he was first of all an honest man, he felt called upon to set the crooked straight. Hauptmann was that pathetic combination, a poet and server of his time,—something different from time-server, though under the inexorable laws of art no less inconsistent with absolute greatness. If he had been more of poet he would have escaped the dangers of logic. If he had been a little more a thinker he would have hardened the delicate impractical edge of his art to definite social uses. But he was a little too much of both poet and thinker, so he falls between the stools of logic and dreams. Hauptmann appeared while the naturalists were asking Pilate's question, and each man

staying long over his answer. His first works were written under their influence. The rest of his life seems to have been a struggle between what he thinks he ought to write to satisfy the call of his citizenship and what he wants to write to satisfy his soul. Often in his product the forms are mixed and we have in "*Hannele*," "*Elga*," "*Und Pippa Tanzt*" strains of poetry mingled with naturalism. Hauptmann comes out in his own person only once, and that is when the service of his citizenship is refused by his own time. In "*The Sunken Bell*" we have the poet soul freed from the trammels of a didactic thought, no longer the handmaiden of social causes, expressing in full abandon with all the clothing of color, of fancy and music the artist's reaction to reality. In the case of Hauptmann the "logic of events" seems likely to carry the artist on beyond the danger zone into a form of art that can be free and yet serviceable. The novel, the form which he has now undertaken, offers to Hauptmann a medium flexible enough for the contending claims of his didacticism and his artistry.

One of the chief influences of the code of systematic thinking has been the perfecting of the instrument of dramatic expression. On the side of pure technic, judged by our universal standards of efficiency and economy, it is safe to say there is little more to be done. The dramatic instrument has been tried and perfected. Yet, strange to say, criticism has always been grudging in its praise to the master craftsmen. Others get credit for their thoughts and ideals, but he who is master of his medium is ignored. This would not be the case in other arts. It is at this point that Mr. Dukes' hard and fast principle of modernity seems weakest. It may be asked whether the masters of technic in per-

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fecting the art of the play to fit the temper of the time have not responded as closely to the orders of the day as have those others who have discovered new messages. Certainly, following the code of a refined logic, they have brought their art to a marvelous subtlety, truth and dexterity.

The expert man of the theatre is always alert to discover some new alignments in life which can be transmuted into theatrical conventions. The men who adapted to the theatre the intellectual problems of the nineteenth century were not necessarily thinkers. Those who did it best made no pretense to be thinkers at all, but skilled theatrical purveyors who knew how to get theatrical value out of the spirit of the age. Yet there is artistic value in this, and the man who can do it is a discoverer and a creator. The institutions of the stage are as a rule as nearly as possible correspondent with the institutions of society, but they are not identical with them, for they are more formalized. The implicit laws of social solidarity are made explicit on the stage to serve as the bases of clearly marked actions and divergences. For this reason dramatic ethics is more exact and concrete than the social ethics which it reflects. It is the province of the theatrical craftsman of each age to discover the theatrical correspondences of the vague social tempers of that time. The earliest statement of a new social point of view is usually made through the theatre. Even though he may not be a thinker at all in the absolute sense, the place of the theatrical craftsman should be considered high, for it is he who isolates the soul of the age. Dumas, in discovering the "demi monde," provided an expedient of the highest theatrical usefulness. Though this class is more clean cut on the stage than it is in real life, and its

ethics more of theatric than of social weight, the isolation of this class for technical purposes was by no means without social significance. In making "The Second Mrs. Tanqueray" very simple and bald, Pinero made good craftsmanship serve in the cause of social thinking, for the story is as true as life and a good deal easier to comprehend. Sudermann's "Magda" is theatrical with the kind of theatricalism that, cartoon-like, illustrates a modern theme in three or four swift strokes. And the technic of Schnitzler has served to epitomize into some very simple stage reactions the meaning of the vague "live your life" program that has been in the air. The craftsmen of naturalism have taken their place in the work of the drama of thought and have done their task so well that on this side there is little else to do. It would seem that as a logical thing the next step will be on some other path.

After revolution came the settling of values. Naturalism grew out of an uneasy romanticism through the operation of the logic of events. And this same logic which made art revolt and destroy is now directing art to the settling of issues and to social reconstruction. It remains to be seen whether constructive social thinking is any more consistent with art than destructive thinking, or indeed, whether it is as consistent. By a certain logic building-up must follow tearing down, but by the time this point is reached in an intellectual program art has ceased to listen to the dictates of logic. There is some kinship between the hot enthusiasms of intellectual revolt and the soul of art. There can be none between the calculating patience of science and the warm glow of artistic creation.

Nowhere is the price that art has to pay for an intellectual program more clear than in the case of

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those artists who pride themselves above all upon their intellects. Four of these come to mind, all treated in Mr. Dukes' book. These are Shaw, who is intellectual at the expense of sincerity; Barker, who is intellectual at the expense of warmth; Brieux, who is intellectual at the expense of charm; and Tchekhov, who is intellectual at the expense of vitality. A study of the plays of these men convinces one that after all and indubitably plays were never intended for expository documents, and that he who selects this medium is laying his thoughts under a heavy handicap. All the technical advance of the modern movement has been toward making the play a more efficient vehicle for the expression of thought, and it still remains inadequate compared with other forms of art. Those dramatists, like Ibsen, who value the play itself above everything, permit the play to speak for itself. Those writers, on the other hand, who use the play as an expository medium, are continually falling back upon other means of exposition, the preface, prologue, appendix, and expanded description of character and action. Dumas, the first of the intellectuals, introduced the long preface to aid him in the completer expounding of the theme inadequately treated in the play. Shaw, like Dryden, may in after times be better remembered for his prefaces, in which he expresses his thought well, than for his plays, in which he expounds his thoughts badly. Shaw and Barker stand as the latest striking examples of the influence of intellectualism in dramatic art. Both are thinkers, the one of a superficial brilliancy, the other of a tenacity and weight truly remarkable. Both reveal in their work the artistic shortcomings incident to a predominant intellectual intent. Shaw is the wielder of a lawless satire; Barker is inap-

proachable in a rarefied atmosphere of thought. Mr. Dukes hails Shaw as the greatest individual force in drama since Ibsen. We will not argue this assertion. But if Mr. Dukes means that Shaw is a representative modern, in the sense that he is a man abreast with or in advance of the thinking of his own times, we must take issue with him. Mr. Shaw never strikes a new note or discovers a new reaction. All his plays are based upon some current or some passing principle. He is a true satirist in that he is always facing the present and getting his text from that which is. The satirist is not the prophet, nor is he concerned with the discovery of coming meanings. Shaw dramatizes the discoveries of yesterday's scientists in a dozen sciences. The biologists, the social psychologists and philosophers, the Ferreros of history-writing, provide him his material. You may search through Shaw's plays, and not one will be found which could not be annotated from the text books of a generation of science and philosophy. How little Shaw is in fact a modern may be appreciated when he is compared with Ibsen. Twenty years after they were composed we pick up Ibsen's later plays with a feeling that now at last the world can understand what this man is talking about, for the world has grown up to him. Shaw's plays belong to yesterday, the day after they are written.

Where the drama of the intellectuals is not inadequate it is cold and almost ceases to be drama. Granville Barker's plays do not lack for a soul of intense feeling, but they are too controlled to be really significant of truth. The man who reacts to only one faculty is little more significant of humanity than the insane man would be. Let us quote from Dukes concerning the hero of the Barker

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play: "At present he appears something of an invalid; pallid, convalescent, bloodless, hobbling upon the crutches of intellect into the consulting room of wit." The men and women who in Ibsen so laboriously, drop by drop, unloaded their souls, have become with Barker easy and debonnair. "Know thyself" has become a commonplace. Interest in life is now becoming formulated into a set of automatic reactions, as certain as mathematics and all in perfect form. In taking much thought upon itself society is becoming a little smug. It would be hard to find greater intellectual feats than those performed by Barker as technician and thinker. But he has left drama naked.

In this clean cut little book of Mr. Dukes' we have a survey of a world of dramatic art that has become conscious of itself, conscious that it is naked and needs to be clothed. Whence is the clothing to come? Naturalism contains the germ of its own downfall, for naturalism pursues always the finer analyses of reality even to the isolation of the infinitesimal under the watchmaker's eye. When the ultimate of analysis has been reached there is still the mystery behind, and the mystery crowds most upon us when our methods have been most circumspect and logical. The exact processes of science carry the physicist to the point at which his science must give way to speculation. In the same way the processes of logic in art carry the artist to the point of mystery. Will not the drama of thought be brought to an end by the logic of its own thinking?

The first beginnings of the new movement are clear enough in this book. The Ibsen of the later plays and the young Maeterlinck had used the methods of the drama of thought to discover the unknowable. Unerringly Dukes sees in the younger

Maeterlinck the notable discoverer in the region of unconscious mood and unrevealed truth. "He dramatized the subconscious, the subterranean and tremulous in man, called it forth and gave it life." He sat at the feet of the naturalists and confounded them with their own logic.

The strongest theme in the drama of the last few years has been the call for Life. Can it be that the keen minds of the dramatists have recognized the thing that is lacking in their art, and so they have made a theme out of that which should be a passionate experience? Has art followed life in reaching out for truth and beauty with the fingers of the mind, and so missed them? Certainly one who reads Ibsen, and Hauptmann, and Sudermann, and Schnitzler, is led to believe that this is so.

This call for Life which has been dominant as an intellectual thing in so much recent drama has been answered by some other artists in another way. During the last years of the naturalistic movement there have been two or three who have refused to join those who seek life with the mind. One of these, Hofmannsthal, in "Death and the Fool," shows us an age which has lost its soul through much searching. Where Life is it is indivisible. That which is a law of life is also a law of art. It is only the inorganic that can be ultimately analysed. The microscope has not isolated life for the eye of science. Why should we expect it to do so for the eye of art? Hofmannsthal and D'Annunzio go back to the art of an indivisible life. They are joined by others, who by different avenues, some through a course of personal disillusion and defeat, have come to take their place with them. If Ibsen's latter plays mean anything, they mean that he, too, would be on the side of the life indivisible could the dead awaken.

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Maeterlinck and Hauptmann, at their best and truest, are there, each in his own character. Barrie has been there all along. Yeats and Synge are there. Through such an art as this festival can come back into drama, and ceremonial, and color, and music, and the old clothing of art in legend and tradition and myth.

It would be a mistake to suggest that art can ever again ignore the results of an era of industrious science. The chief glory of Hofmannsthal has been that he transmutes the facts of investigation into the larger life which we trust will constitute the coming order. We cannot expect the new art to be the same as the art of the days of our innocence. We have eaten of the tree of knowledge and the art will be a more sophisticated thing. But we believe it will be not less beautiful for that. For we will find the vivid imaginings of an ancient beauty taking on new meanings in the light of an understanding at once exact and reverent.

Such are some of the speculations that come to one as he surveys the field of modern drama through the medium of Mr. Dukes' admirable little volume. This once confused field is rapidly coming into clearer outline. Future critics will owe a debt to Mr. Dukes for his sane judgments and absolute standards. And many living playwrights owe a debt to him for his quick intuitive understanding. Other books will follow which will give a more comprehensive survey, but to Mr. Dukes will belong the credit of being the first to see the situation at a glance.

THOMAS H. DICKINSON.

## ON THE ART OF THE THEATRE

At rare intervals—perhaps once in a decade or so—there appears a book bearing the unmistakable stamp of genius. Such a book is Mr. E. Gordon Craig's "On the Art of the Theatre."<sup>\*</sup> The author, a son of Ellen Terry, and acknowledged all over Europe as a master-pioneer of the Theatre, here presents the fruit of twenty years or more of actual stage experience and experiment. His book is not a treatise on scene-painting, or a manual of first aid to stage managers, or a text-book on the art of acting. It is, rather, a series of brilliantly written and stimulating papers embodying a revolutionary arraignment of the Theatre as it is, and a new and noble conception of the Theatre as it might be. To every one who takes an intelligent interest in the modern Theatre, from whatever standpoint, this is a book which simply cannot be overlooked. And even to those persons who have no interest in the Theatre (if there are any such) the book will appeal irresistibly through its charm of style, its vigorous and invigorating thought, its fine idealism and wealth of suggestion.

This is the opinion, written anonymously, of the editor of a famous literary journal. Were we to give our own estimate, we might be accused of favoritism, since we have a vital interest in Mr. Craig's success. Moreover, no further opinions are needed, for "On the Art of the Theatre" is already the most reviewed

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<sup>\*</sup> "On the Art of the Theatre," by Edward Gordon Craig, with numerous illustrations by the author, \$2.00 net, by mail \$2.14. Published by Charles H. Sergel & Co., Chicago.

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book of the year. Rather let us quote from a few of the many reviews already written:

Here is a man of genius and his book. What shall be done with them? It is a difficult question. In the old days the stake or a convenient dungeon was resorted to, according to the enormity of the offence. Now-a-days we are humanitarians. A decade or so of neglect and sneers is considered a sufficient test. If these are survived, then we begin to think—perhaps there was something in him after all! But even then, it is just this quality of genius that makes our very gratitude ineffectual. There is no "job" for genius. The commonplace "safe" man can always be made secretary, or manager, or professor of something or other; but the genius must keep on crying in the desert until his prophecy is fulfilled, and then he is needed no more, and a monument is duly raised to his memory.

No lover of the theatre can help confessing that this is what we are in process of doing in the case of Mr. Gordon Craig. Acknowledged all over Europe as a master-pioneer in the theatre, he is practically ignored in his own country. Yet if anyone doubts Mr. Craig's genius, they have only to read this book of his "On the Art of the Theatre." It is instinct with genius. On every page are illuminating flashes of thought, vista-visions, tangential flights of fancy, that betray a mind entirely different from that of the ordinary pedestrian thinker. One can see notion after notion that might be captured and turned to practical account.

THE NATION (London).

The book is dynamic. Whether one follow Mr. Craig or not to the end of the trail he blazes, this book is one of the timeliest chances that could befall the young playwrights of our own country, scattered and unsupported as they are, without a common watch-word. And whether this book stimulates to fellow-work or opposition matters little enough. It is bound to shake us all broad awake, with the shock and challenge of unquestionable genius.

JOSEPHINE PRESTON PEABODY (Author of *The Piper*).

This is a book of ideas, every page of which deserves to be read and thought over by all lovers of the theatre. . . . In this really wonderful book one learns how far-reaching

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are Mr. Craig's real aims, what a tremendous challenge he intends to the whole purpose and practice of our stage as it is.

LONDON DAILY CHRONICLE.

True Art is always discovering the marvel in all that does not seem to be marvellous at all, because Art is not imitation but vision. That is the great discovery of Mr. Craig on the stage. He found the forgotten Wonder-land with the Sleeping Beauty; the land of our dreams and wishes, and has fought for it with the gestures of an Artist, with the soul of a child, with the knowledge of a student, and with the constancy of a lover. He has done the greatest service to the Art in which we are so profoundly interested, and it is a great happiness for us all that he comes off with flying colors. He has his admirers and followers in our little Hungary, the whole of the new generation being under his influence; and without any disparagement to the great merit and good luck of Professor Reinhardt, we Hungarians, as close neighbors and good observers, dare say that almost all that has been done in Berlin or Dusseldorf, in Munich or in Mannheim, for the last ten years is to be called the success of Mr. Craig.

DR. ALEXANDER HEVESI, of the State Theatre, Budapest.

If the stage were not soggy with inutile traditions, such a book as Gordon Craig's volume would create a revolution. . . . Serious craftsmen of the theatre and hopeful lovers of the theatre will take it to heart as a momentous and stimulating volume.

JAMES O'DONNELL BENNETT (in *The Chicago Record-Herald*).

It is hopeless to approach the work and aspirations of any man of genius except in the spirit of equality and fellowship. The very vigor and the overflowing quality of this book of Mr. Gordon Craig's lend color to the superstitious and awful conception of a man of genius as a lofty, superior, semi-idiotic, and eccentric being. The very sincerity of the book makes it a mark for insincerity, and its ideas unintelligible to those men in England who are victims of the disease of theatricality. And yet, in their heart of hearts, it is the diseased who most worship health, the weak who most ardently crave force. Mr. Craig's book is tingling with

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force and radiant with health. It is full of courage, not only in attack, but also in adventure. . . . It is a vital book . . . invigorating and inspiring—most of all when the writer leaves attacking what is and stating what will be. . . . Then every word leaps from the printed page with all the dynamic nobility of creative force. . . . He has analyzed the evil of the theatre and stated it with a fearlessness infinitely refreshing in these days of timid thought, speech, writing, and criticism—stated it also with charm and disinterestedness so that only the foolish and the vain can be offended.

THE OBSERVER (London).

It is remarkably suggestive and fascinating, and all students of the drama should read it with pleasure and profit.

DAVID BELASCO.

Mr. Craig has many wise and splendid and humorous things to say, and much good counsel to give. His knowledge of the craftsmanship of the stage is deep and wide; he can be as practical as the groundlings he abhors. . . . We advise all those whose profession is in the theatre to read his book carefully, and to assimilate the striving and earnestness which are breathed in every line.

LONDON STANDARD.

If every theatre-goer could—and would—read Mr. Craig's book, we would get some experiments in scenery and productions, instead of the same old repetitions of realism that isn't real but is generally ugly. I shall have frequent occasion, of course, to mention the book.

WALTER PRICHARD EATON.

The book is deeply and stimulatingly suggestive, it arrests the attention, it commands reflection by the completeness of its break with all the traditions.

NEW YORK TRIBUNE.

To future times it will be clear that Mr. Craig's real work was that of the prophet, the mouth through which the dawn of the new art of the theatre made its music. . . . All his work, however, practical or prophetic, will tend in the same direction: the vindication of an art of the theatre which is an art distinct from the other arts which it employs, and

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the rescue of that art from the barren search after the imitation of nature. . . . So we shall get, not the real world, which to Mr. Craig is a disappointing and deceptive place, but a realer world, homogeneous, beautiful, significant, grave, and spiritual.

LONDON TIMES.

The timeliness of this book for American circulation is apparent. No current in the intellectual and idealistic life of the nation is more significant now than the altered rating of stage, play, and playwright. . . . Mr. Craig has ideals for the stage that are lofty, that are untainted by commercialism, and he has a theory of acting that rises above facile impersonation to that of vital construction. His iconoclastic temper, his dogmatism recalling at times that of Carlyle or Ruskin, and his aptness of illustration drawn from his experience as an actor and as a student of conditions in the finest of the continental playhouses, all make him a fertilizing writer, and would make him an equally stirring lecturer.

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR.

This book deserves close attention. It embodies the idea of a new theatre, one that is for art and not for business. It outlines what one may call a new philosophy of dramatic creation.

THE ENGLISH REVIEW.

Mr. Craig differs from many idealists in having a solid foundation for the lower stones, at least, of his castles in the air. He knows the modern theatre thoroughly in all its manifestations, is conversant with the achievements of all the subsidized and independent dramatic experiments in London, St. Petersburg, Paris, Berlin, Munich, and elsewhere, and is as ardent a student of the past as he is a sanguine prophet of the future. . . . No man could lay his finger more unerringly upon the chief causes of the decadence of the contemporary theatre. With the authority born of personal experience he points out how the spirit of commercialism has destroyed all honorable artistic ambition, and blocked original enterprise; what an insuperable bar to progress the actor-manager has become; how the initiative of actors has been killed; how the inevitable lack of trained intelligence is completing the ruin that speculative greed began. Nothing could be more true or more lamentable.

THE NATION (New York).

An individual, bewildering, interesting, and provocative book. Bold originality and fearless experiment are not common characteristics of the theatre anywhere, and therefore an artist so completely "on his own" as Mr. Craig must be warmly welcomed.

LONDON DAILY EXPRESS.

In this volume the soul of the theatre is articulate. At last an artist of the theatre has spoken as the authentic critic of its art—a creator of it. For too long the theatre's art has been interpreted only from the outside by its commentators and purveyors; for the first time, in the fulness of modern experience and prophecy, it is revealed from within, by its artist-expert, Gordon Craig. In this astonishing volume he pulls the shrill and tawdry playhouses of two hemispheres clattering about our ears in dust heaps, and from this revolution he rebuilds serene and joyous temples for the aspiring mind. Perhaps no task could be more nobly imaginative and difficult than his: to make clear and comprehensible the outlines of a beauty yet-to-be. But this task he has well-nigh accomplished, in a style so simple, confiding, and undismayed that the reader soon feels himself borne onward, as friend with friend, in charmed conversation. This style, which grants fellowship with such largeness, is itself a sign of the seeking, creative spirit which imbues the whole work. Whether we agree with its author in whole, or only in part, or not at all, one startling conviction abides from the reading of this book: that, because of it, never again can we think of the theatre as before. Here in this volume its art is reborn in creative beauty.

PERCY MACKAYE.

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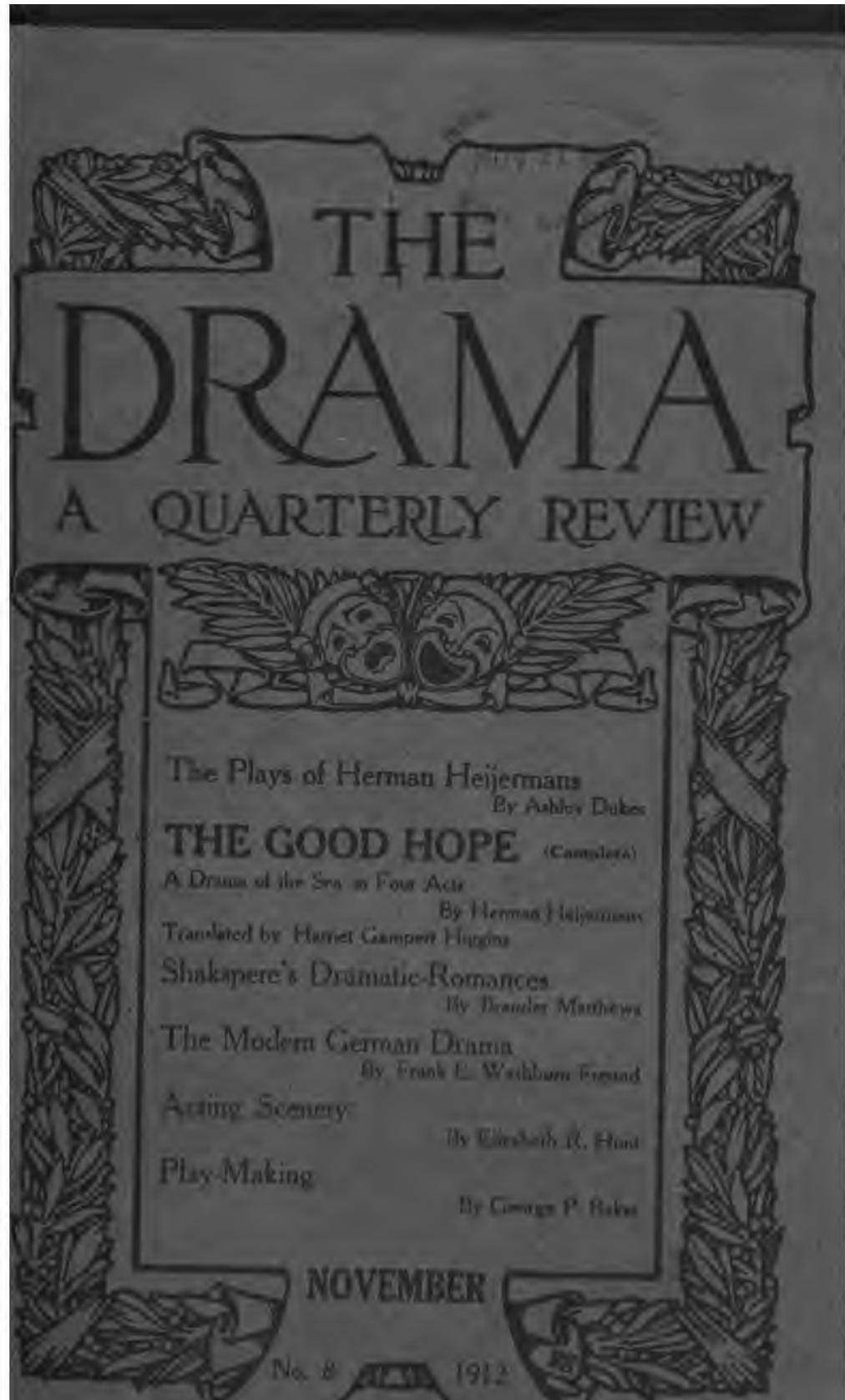
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Play-Making

By George P. Baker

NOVEMBER

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# THE DRAMA

A QUARTERLY REVIEW OF DRAMATIC LITERATURE

EDITOR, CHARLES HUBBARD SERGEL

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# THE DRAMA

A Quarterly Review of Dramatic Literature

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No. 8

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## THE PLAYS OF HERMAN HEIJERMANS.



O THOSE content with convenient superficialities the plays of a dramatist such as Heijermans are easy of definition. He is dismissed as "a realistic writer," "a playwright of the naturalistic school," a follower of Ibsen, or Hauptmann, or Tolstoy, or Zola. Even then, perhaps, the definitions are not exhausted. They spring from the encyclopedia of commonplaces, and are as chaotic as the minds of their authors. There is the adjective "meticulous," for example,—invaluable to critics. And "morbid,"—equally indispensable, in the form of "morbid psychology." "Photographic" and "kinematographic" must not be forgotten; the latter an almost brand-new weapon of offence. For the rest, "grey," "faithful," "squalid" or "lifelike" will serve their turn, according to the critic's point of view.

In phrases such as these we hear the echoes of a controversy now a generation old; a controversy dating back to the "free theatres" of the 1890 period in Paris, Berlin and London, the first per-

formances of Ibsen's "Ghosts," and the early plays of Hauptmann and Strindberg. Then the issues between Realist and Philistine were sharply defined; the very terms were mutually exclusive. To be modern, to be "free," was to be an Ibsenite, an apostle of moral indignation, an author or playgoer burning to lay bare social hypocrisies and shams; not merely *pour épater le bourgeois*, but in order to assert the Great Truths of Actual Life, so recently discovered by the stage. It mattered little that Ibsenites owed their existence to their misunderstanding of Ibsen. He had supplied them with an essential war cry. The old domination of insincere sentiment and false romance in the theatre was indefensible and insupportable. All the enthusiasm of dramatic reformers was perforce directed to the advance of the new realistic movement. Hence arose a battle of epithets between the two camps, with "antiquated," "conventional," "sentimental," "romantic" on the one hand, and "vulgar," "dreary," "indecent," "noisome" on the other.

In Anglo-Saxon countries, naturally enough, the issue was made one of morality rather than artistic method. Ibsen's views on marriage were suspect, and the whole dramatic movement lay in quarantine. Indeed, realism in literature came to be regarded as an unsettling tendency, emanating from the Continent, and directed against all British institutions from property to religion. The division of opinion may be studied in historical documents such as the criticisms of the London Press on the first English performance of "Hedda Gabler," and the early prefaces of Bernard Shaw; the one side tilting at realism, the other at romance;—both, alas, the most shifty of windmills where morality is concerned.

The provocative cry of "naturalism," raised by

the newer dramatists and their supporters, was responsible for half the trouble. A naturalist, in good English usage, is taken to be a professor with a butterfly net or an inquirer into the lower forms of pond life; and there is a good deal to be said for the analogy as applied to the author of realistic literature. Pins and chloroform may be his implements of tragedy; his coldly scientific method gives point to the comparison. Undoubtedly the "naturalistic drama" suggested probable inhumanity and possible horror. In any case it clearly offered no hope of an enjoyable evening, and was condemned from the first to be unpopular.

So much for the misconception encouraged by a purely journalistic phrase. Useless to maintain that the older dramatists, from Robertson and Dumas *filis* to Sardou, held a monopoly of the milk of human kindness, while Ibsen, Hauptmann, Tolstoy and Strindberg wallowed in mere brutal, original sin. The alleged "naturalism" of the latter belied its name. It ranged from revolutionary Utopianism to the creation of most unnatural giants,—stage characters removed from the average of everyday life by their own distinction. Indeed, the differences between the old school and the new were as nothing compared with the intellectual gulf between, say, Strindberg and Tolstoy. Setting out from the common ground of external approximation to life, the dramatists of the period soon diverged upon individual paths. Hauptmann passed from the vivid and revolutionary "Weavers" to the mythology of "Hannele" and the "Sunken Bell," and the simple domestic drama of "Fuhrmann Henschel" and "Rose Bernd." Tolstoy became a preacher; Strindberg a Swedenborgian mystic. Of the early playwrights of the French Théâtre Libre, Courteline and

Ancey, practised the *Comédie rosse*, or brutal comedy, until Paris, tired of the uncouth novelty, turned to the more amiable and no less natural work of Capus and Donnay. Brieux devoted himself to the composition of dramatic tracts. Bernard Shaw, after protesting that he "could none other" than dramatize slum landlords and rent collectors in "Widowers' Houses," found readier targets for his wit in bishops, professors of Greek and millionaires. Nature, in fact, proved too strong for naturalism. No formula could embrace all the individual playwrights of that stormy time. The most catholic of "schools" could not hold them.

Formulas, however, die hard; and it is still necessary to free Heijermans from the "naturalistic" label so conveniently attached in 1890 to works like Tolstoy's "Power of Darkness," Hauptmann's *Vor Sonnenaufgang* and Zola's "Thérèse Raquin." All that his plays have in common with theirs is a faithful observation of life, and more particularly of life among the common people. Moreover, he belongs to a newer generation. He had written several short pieces (notably *Ahasuerus* and '*n Jodenstreek?*') in 1893 and 1894, but "The Ghetto" (1899) was his first important play. This three-act tragedy of the Jewish quarter in a Dutch city has been published in an English adaptation which woefully misrepresents the original, and I should rather refer readers to a German translation (Berlin, Fleische) revised by Heijermans himself. Like most early work, the play did not satisfy its author, and several versions exist.

The story is simple enough. Rafael, the son of an old Jewish merchant, has an intrigue with the Gentle maid-servant, Rose. His father, Sachel, lives in an atmosphere of mistrust, hard dealing, thievery; a patriarch with all the immemorial wrongs of the

ghetto upon his shoulders, and all the racial instinct to preserve property, family and religion from contact with "strange people." He is blind, but in the night he has heard the lovers' footsteps in the house. Rose has lied to him; Rafael, as usual, is neglecting his business for Gentile companions. So the play opens. After some bargaining over the dowry, a marriage is arranged for Rafael with the daughter of another merchant. The authority of the Rabbi is called in, but Rafael refuses. He is a freethinker; in the ghetto, but not of it. "Oh, these little rooms of yours,—these hot, stifling chambers of despair, where no gust of wind penetrates, where the green of the leaves grows yellow, where the breath chokes and the soul withers! No, let me speak, Rabbi Haeser! Now I am the priest; I, who am no Jew and no Christian, who feel God in the sunlight, in the summer fragrance, in the gleam of the water and the flowers upon my mother's grave . . . I have pity for you, for your mean existence, for your ghettos and your little false gods—for the true God is yet to come, the God of the new community; the commonwealth without gods, without baseness, without slaves!"

Sachel is blamed for allowing this open rupture to come about. It is better to pay the girl off quietly and have done with her, argue the other Jews. Every woman has her price—and especially every Gentile woman. A hundred gulden—perhaps two hundred if she is obstinate—will settle the matter. The money is offered, but Rose is not to be bought. She has promised to go away with Rafael as his wife. He has gone out, but he will return for her. The family tell her that the money is offered with his consent; that he is tired of her and has left home for good. But she is unmoved. She has learned to

mistrust the word of the Jews ; she will only believe their sacred oath. At last old Sachel swears by the roll of the commandments that his son will not return. In despair, Rose throws herself into the canal and is drowned. Rafael comes too late to save her. The God of the Jews has taken his revenge.

The play is perhaps a little naïve and crudely imagined, but it has all the essential characteristics of Heijermans' later work ; the intense humanitarian feeling, the burning rhetoric, the frankly partisan denunciation of society. Indeed, it could not be otherwise. In dealing with such a case of bigotry and racial intolerance, it is idle for a playwright to hold the scales with abstract justice. At most he can only humanise the tragedy by humanising the villains of his piece, and showing them driven into cruelty by traditional forces beyond their control. That is the part of the "Ankläger," the social prophet and Public Prosecutor ; and it is the part which Heijermans, above all others, has filled in the newer dramatic movement.

In *Het Pantser* ("The Coat of Mail") his subject is the life of a Dutch garrison town. "The Coat of Mail" is militarism ; the creed of the governing caste. And the setting is peculiarly apt for the presentation of a social issue. In a small country such as Holland military patriotism may be strong, but it is tempered by the knowledge that the country only exists by the tolerance, or the diplomatic agreement, of more powerful neighbours, and that in case of war it could do no more than sacrifice an army to the invader. To the philosophic workman, then, well read in revolutionary literature from Marx to Kropotkin, the standing army presents itself simply as a capitalist tool, a bulwark of the employing class against trade unionism. The industrial struggle is

uncomplicated by sentimentality. Patriotic stampedes to the conservative side are unknown. Social Democracy is strong. Strikes are frequent, and the protection of "blackleg" labourers is in the hands of the garrison. That is the theme of this "romantic military play."

Mari, a second lieutenant, refuses to serve on strike duty. He is a weak but sincere idealist; his head full of humanitarian enthusiasm, his rooms stocked with anti-militarist pamphlets. He will leave the army rather than order his men to fire on the factory workers. Around him stand the members of the military caste, linked together by tradition and family relationship. His father is a colonel in the same regiment; the father of his fiancée, Martha, is commanding officer. One friend he has: an army doctor named Berens, who has infected himself with cancer serum in attempting to discover a cure for the disease, and passes for a drunkard because he keeps the symptoms in check by alcohol. Here a parallel is drawn between military bravery and the civilian courage of the scientist.

Mari is put under arrest, but the affair is kept secret in order to avoid a scandal. He can only be reinstated by full withdrawal and apology. Martha comes to him and implores him to withdraw. The strike is thought to be over. He can plead the excitement of the moment in excuse, and the matter will be settled honorably. He gives way and apologises. A friendly discussion of the point with his superior officers is interrupted by a volley in the street outside. The troops have fired upon the mob, and the son of the shoemaker over the way has been shot.

Mari sends in his papers; but a newspaper has published the facts of the case, and he is met with the disgrace of immediate dismissal from the army.

This does not suit Martha. She must marry a soldier; civilian life with a dismissed lieutenant was not in the bond. So Mari suffers another disillusionment, and the end of the play sees him setting out from home, while the old shoemaker is left to lament for his son.

And the sum total of it all? A warm heart, a weakness for rhetoric, and—a study in vacillation.

In *Ora et Labora* Heijermans is less rhetorical; rather, one suspects, for lack of a mouthpiece. His peasants bear their fate, if not in silence, with almost inarticulate resignation. They are too hungry to waste words. Moreover, there is no visible enemy to denounce, no Coat of Mail, no racial prejudice, no insatiate capitalism. Winter is the villain of the piece. This is indeed naturalism, in the literal sense; humanity devoured by Nature. Everything is frost-bound: the canal, the soil, the very cattle. The barges are idle. There is no work and no warmth. When the last cow upon the farm dies of disease, its throat is cut so that it can be sold to the butcher. All hopes are centred in the father of the family, who is to sell the carcase in the town; but he spends the money and returns home drunk. As a last resort, his son Eelke enlists in the army for six years' colonial service, leaving Sytske, the girl he was about to marry. His advance pay buys fuel and food, but the lovers part with a hopeless quarrel, and the old peasants are left wrangling over the money he has brought.

*Allerseelen* (1906) is a later work. A village pastor finds a woman in a state of collapse upon his threshold. He takes her in, and she gives birth to a child. She is a stranger in the district, Rita by name. The child is sent into the village to be nursed,

while the pastor gives up his own room to the mother. She recovers slowly, and meanwhile the peasants set their tongues to work upon the scandal. The child is discovered to be illegitimate. A good village housewife is suckling a bastard. The pastor is housing an outcast, and shows no sign of sending her about her business. The neighbouring clergy are perturbed. Dimly and distantly the Bishop is said to be considering the facts. . . . Amid alarms and excursions the affair pursues its course. The village passes from astonishment to ribaldry, from ribaldry to stone-throwing. The pastor speaks gently of Christian charity and souls to be saved, but fails to appease his parishioners. They are hot upon the scent in a heresy-hunt. If they could see within the parsonage walls, they would yelp still louder. For Rita proves to be an unblushing hedonist. No prayers for her, when the birth-pangs are once over; no tears, no repentance. She sings gaily in her room while the pastors argue about duty and morals. She feels "heavenly." She invades the study to enjoy a view of sunlight, clouds and sea. She finds the waves more musical than the wheezing of the church organ. If only the child were with her, her happiness would be complete.

But the child is neglected by its foster mother. It sickens and dies. The pastor is driven from his church by the Bishop, and leaves the broken windows of the parsonage to his successor. Rita and he are both homeless now. And then the child's father comes,—another hedonist. The child is dead, but Life remains. Its body lies in unconsecrated ground, but the vows of love are renewed at the graveside. The Church can only crush its own slaves. All roads are open to the spirits of the free. The pastor can

only offer a hopeless "Farewell" as the two set out upon their way. But Rita calls after, "No,—no! You will come over to us."

It matters nothing that this gospel of Life has often been preached. Heijermans has caught the spirit of it as well as the letter. His characters say and do nothing particularly original; nothing that would even pass for originality by reason of its manner. He works in vivid contrasts, without a shade of paradox. He figures the opposed forces of Reaction and Revolution in religion, in statecraft, in economics, in all human relationships, with a simplicity of mind which would draw a smile from the forever up-to-date "intellectual." Reaction is a devilish superstition; Revolution a prophetic angel pointing the way to the promised land. The one is false, the other true. There is no disputing the point, since truth and falsehood are absolute terms. Perhaps the secret is that Heijermans never tires of his own philosophy. He is content to see it firmly planted on the ground; he does not demand that it should walk the tight-rope or turn somersaults as an intellectual exercise. He has accepted a view of life which some call materialistic, and others positivist, or scientific, or humanitarian; but for him it is simply humane,—founded upon social justice and human need.

A philosophy, however, does not make a dramatist. In the plays I have already described Heijermans shows his power of translating the world-struggle of thought into the dramatic clash of will, but it is upon "The Good Hope" (*Op Hoop van Zegen*) that his reputation chiefly depends. He chooses a great subject; not merely the conflict of shipowners and fishermen in the struggle for existence, but the seafaring life and the ocean itself. Truly "a sea-

piece"; tempestuous, powerful. One can hear the breaking of the waves. From the opening scene, with the old men's tale of sharks, to the night of the storm in the third act, when the women and children huddle in Kneirtje's cottage for shelter, the story is always the same. The sea is the symbol of Fate. It takes a father here, a brother there. It seizes Geert and Barend alike; the one going aboard carelessly, the other screaming resistance. Sometimes it plays with its victims on shore, making no sign, leaving months of hope to end in despair. In a more merciful mood it sends children running through the village to cry " 'n Ball op! 'n Ball op!" as an overdue ship is signalled from the coastguard tower. And there an echo of the sea-ballad now and again; when raps are heard upon the door at the height of the storm, or a flapping curtain blows out the lamp, or a pallid face is seen at the window. . . .

In sheer force of theatrical construction "*The Good Hope*" is still more striking. There are great moments, finely conceived. The play is full of natural rather than violent coincidence. Barend has always feared death by drowning, and he makes his first and last voyage in a leaky trawler. His father sank in a wreck, and it is his mother, unable to maintain the household, who persuades him to go. She fears the disgrace of his refusal after the papers are signed, but he is dragged aboard by the harbour police. His brother Geert sets out proudly enough, singing the *Marseillaise* and preaching rebellion; but he sinks far away, impotent, unheard, and leaves his sweetheart to bear a fatherless child. Old Cobus can only reflect, "We take the fishes, and God takes us." That is perhaps the most dramatic thread of all,—the parallel of fate. The struggle for existence on land drives men to the fishing-boats and the

Dogger Bank. From the minnows to leviathan, there is no escape. "We take the fishes, and God takes us." A gale of wind and rain whistles through the play, sweeping the decks of life, tossing men out into the unknown.

Let us turn to the social standpoint. The ship-owner, Bos, is frankly a villain. He knows "The Good Hope" is unseaworthy, but he allows her to sail. True, the warning comes from a drunken ship's carpenter, but he understands the risks. Business is business. The ship is well insured. . . .

It is implied, then, that shipowners are unscrupulous scoundrels, and fishermen their unhappy victims. Here is a bias which makes the actual tragedy no more impressive. Good ships, as well as bad, may perish in a storm. Nature is cruel enough without the help of man. The problem of the big fish and the little fish is one of size, not of morality. Even sharks may possibly rejoice in an amiable temperament. It can only be said that Heijermans has here chosen the right motive for his own particular type of drama. His sympathy is with the fishermen. He knows that, humanly speaking, in every conflict between employers and employed, the men are right and the masters wrong. Impossible to redress the balance by individual virtue or kindness. The masters stand for the exploiting system; for capital, for insurance, for power, for law and order and possession. Their risks are less and their temptations greater. Even from the standpoint of abstract justice, a dishonest employer may fairly be set against a drunken labourer or a gaol-bird fisherman. The one is no less natural than the other. But Heijermans goes beyond all finicking considerations of this sort. He seeks to destroy and rebuild, not to repair or adjust. He avoids mere naturalism;

the "conscientious transcription of all the visible and repetition of all the audible" is not for him. And here he is undoubtedly justified, not only by his own experience, but by that of other dramatists. There was no inspiration in the movement towards mere actuality on the stage. It sickened of its own surfeit of "life." Its accumulated squalor became intolerable. It was choked by its own irrelevance, circumscribed by its own narrowness. For naturalism is like a prison courtyard; it offers only two ways of escape. One is the poet's upward flight, the other the revolutionist's battering-ram. Heijermans has chosen his own weapon, and used it well. He has given us "The Good Hope," not as a mere pitiful study in disillusionment, but as a tragic symbol of human effort in the conquest of despair.

ASHLEY DUKES.

## THE GOOD HOPE.

A Drama of the Sea in Four Acts.  
By Herman Heijermans, Jr.  
Translated by Harriet Gampert Higgins.

### PERSONS.

KNEIRTJE, *a fisherman's widow.*

GEERT }  
BAREND } *her sons.*

Jo, *her niece.*

COBUS, *her brother.*

DAANTJE, *from the Old Men's Home.*

CLEMENS BOSS, *a ship owner.*

CLEMENTINE, *his daughter.*

MATHILDE, *his wife.*

SIMON, *a ship carpenter's assistant.*

MARIETJE, *his daughter.*

MEES, MARIETJE's *betrothed.*

KAPS, *a bookkeeper.*

SAAET, *a fisherman's widow.*

TRUUS, *a fisherman's wife.*

JELLE, *a beggar.*

FIRST POLICEMAN.

SECOND POLICEMAN.

The Drama is laid in a North Sea fishing village.

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# THE GOOD HOPE

A Drama of the Sea in Four Acts.

By Herman Heijermans, Jr.

## ACT I.

[KNEIERTJE's home, a poor living-room. At the left, two wall bedsteads and a door; to the right, against the wall, a chest of drawers with holy images, vases and photographs. A chimney fireplace nearer front. At the back wall, near right corner, a wicket leading to the cooking shed; at left against the wall a cupboard; a cage with dove; window with flower pots, left of center; in back wall right of center a door overlooking a narrow cobblestone roadway backed by a view of beach with sea in middle distance and horizon. Through the window to the left is seen the red tiled lower corner of roof of a cottage. Time, noon.]

CLEMENTINE. [Sketch book on her knee.] Now, then! Cobus!

COBUS. [Who poses, awakes with a start, smiles.] He-he-he! I wasn't asleep— No, no—

CLEM. Head this way—still more—what ails you now? You were sitting so natural. Hand on the knee again.

COBUS. Tja—when you sit still so long—you get stiff.

CLEM. [Impatiently.] Please! please! stop chewing.

COB. I haven't any chew. Look.

CLEM. Then keep your mouth shut.

DAANTJE. [Entering by the cooking shed.] Good day.

CLEM. Good day. Take a walk around the corner.

DAAN. No, Miss—time's up. [Looking at sketch.] It don't look like him yet.

CLEM. [Smiling.]

DAAN. [Shifting his spectacles.] You see—if I may take the liberty, Miss—his chin sets different—and his eyes don't suit me—but his nose—that's him—and—and—his necktie, that's mighty natural—I'd swear to that anywhere.

CLEM. Indeed.

DAAN. And the bedstead with the curtains—that's fine. Now, Miss, don't you think you could use me?

CLEM. Perhaps. Hand higher—keep your mouth still.

COB. That's easy said—but when y'r used to chewing and ain't allowed to—then you can't hold your lips still—what do you say, Daantje?

DAAN. I say time's up. We eat at four and the matron is strict.

CLEM. That will be necessary with you old fellows.

DAAN. Peh! We've a lot to bring in, haven't we? An Old Man's Home is a jail—scoldings with your feed—as if y'r a beggar. Coffee this morning like the bottom of the rain barrel—and peas as hard as y'r corns.

CLEM. If I were in your place—keep your mouth still—I'd thank God my old age was provided for.

COB. Tja—tja—I don't want to blaspheme, but—

DAAN. Thank God!— Not me—sailed from my tenth year—voyages—more than you could count—

suffered shipwreck—starvation—lost two sons at sea—no—no. I say the matron is a beast—I'd like to slap her jaw.

CLEM. That will do! This is no dive.

DAAN. I know that, but it makes your gorge rise. I wasn't allowed to go out last week because, begging your pardon, I missed and spat beside the sand box. Now I ask, would you spit beside a box on purpose? An old man's home is a jail—and when they've shut you up, in one of them, decent, they're rid of you. Wish the sharks had eaten me before I quit sailing.

COB. [Giggling.] He! he! he! Man, the sharks wouldn't eat you—you were too tough for them.

CLEM. Keep your lips still!

COB. Tja, tja.

DAAN. Sharks not like me— They'll swallow a corpse. Peh! I saw old Willem bitten in two till the blood spouted on high. And he was a thin man.

CLEM. Was old Willem eaten by a shark?

DAAN. By one? By six. Quick as he fell overboard they grabbed him. The water was red.

CLEM. Hey! How frightful. And yet— I'd rather like to see a thing like that.

DAAN. Like to see it! We had to.

CLEM. Did he scream?

DAAN. Did he scream!

COB. Tja, wouldn't you if you felt the teeth in your flesh? He—hehe!

[Sound of a fiddle is heard outside. COBUS sways in his chair in time to the tune.] Ta da da de—da da da—

CLEM. [Hastily closing the sketch book.] There then! [Rises.] Tomorrow you sit still—You hear!

COB. [Stretching himself.] All stiff! [Dances,

*snapping his fingers, his knees wabbling.]* Ta de da da—da-da-da.

DAAN. [At the window.] Psst! Nobody home.

JELLE. [Playing at window outside.] If you please.

DAAN. Nobody home.

JELLE. I come regular once a week.

DAAN. They have gone to the harbor.

CLEM. [Throws a coin out of the window.] There! [Playing stops.]

JELLE. Thank you. [Searches for the coin.]

COB. Behind that stone, stupid.

DAAN. No; more that way.

CLEM. I threw it out that way. Hey! what a donkey! Is he near-sighted?

COB. He's got only half an eye—and with half an eye you don't see much. [To JELLE.] Behind you!

JELLE. I don't see anything.

DAAN. [BAREND appears at door.] Psst! Hey! Barend, you help him—

CLEM. There is a ten-cent piece out there.

BAREND. [Basket of driftwood on his back.] Give it to 'im in his paws then. [Enters.] [Throws down basket with a thud.] Here!

COB. Did you hear that impudent boy?

CLEM. Say there, big ape, were you speaking to me?

BAR. [Shy and embarrassed.] No, Miss. I did not know you were there, I thought—

COB. What right had you to think—better be thinking of going to sea again to earn your Mother's bread.

BAR. That's none of your business.

COB. Just hear his insolence to me—when he's too bashful to open his mouth to others. [Taunt-

*ing.] I'm not afraid—he-he-he!—No, I don't get the belly ache when I must go to sea—he-he-he!*

DAAN. Come along now. It's struck four.

CLEM. Ten o'clock tomorrow, Cobus.

DAAN. He can't do it, Miss, we must pull weeds in the court yard.

COB. Yes, we must scratch the stones.

CLEM. Tomorrow afternoon, then.

COB. Tja! I'll be here, then. Good day, Miss.

[To BAREND.] Good day, pudding breeches.

CLEM. [Pinning on her hat.] He teases you, doesn't he?

BAR. [Laughing bashfully.] Yes, Miss.

CLEM. Been out searching the beach? [He nods embarrassed.] Found much?

BAR. No, it was ebb last night—and—and—[Gets stuck.]

CLEM. Are you really afraid to go to sea, silly boy? [He nods, laughing.] They all go.

BAR. [Dully.] Yes, they all go.

CLEM. A man must not be afraid—

BAR. No, a man must not be afraid.

CLEM. Well, then?

BAR. [Timidly.] I'd rather stay on shore.

CLEM. I won't force you to go—How old are you?

BAR. Rejected for the army last month.

CLEM. Rejected?

BAR. For my—for my—I don't know why, but I was rejected.

CLEM. [Laughing.] That's lucky—A soldier that's afraid!

BAR. [Flaring up quickly.] I'm not afraid on land—let them come at me—I'll soon stick a knife through their ribs!

CLEM. Fine!

BAR. [Again lapsing into embarrassment.] Beg

pardon, Miss. [*The soft tooting of a steamboat whistle is heard.*] That's the Anna—there's a corpse on board—

CLEM. Another one dead!

BAR. The flag hung half-mast.

CLEM. Tu-tu-tu-tu—The second this week. First, the Agatha Maria—

BAR. No, 'twas the Charlotte.

CLEM. Oh, yes! The Agatha was last week—Do they know who? [*He shakes his head.*] Haven't you any curiosity?

BAR. Ach—you get used to it—and none of our family are aboard. [*Embarrassed silence.*] Father can't—Hendrick can't—Josef can't—you know about them—and—and—Geert—he's still under arrest.

CLEM. Yes, he's brought disgrace on all of you.

BAR. Disgrace—disgrace—

CLEM. When is he free?

BAR. I don't know.

CLEM. You don't know?

BAR. They gave him six months—but they deduct the time before trial—we don't know how long that was, so we can't tell.

KNEIETJE. [*Through the window.*] Good day, Miss.

CLEM. Good day.

KNEIE. How did the chickens get out? Do look at that rooster! Get out, you salamander! Kischt! Jo! Jo!

BAR. Let them alone. They'll go of themselves.

KNEIR. [*Entering the room.*] That's an endless devilment, Miss. [*To BAREND.*] Come, you, stick out your paws. Must we have another row with Ari?

BAR. Then we'll have a row. [*Goes off indifferently, chases away the chickens, outside.*]

KNEIR. Then we'll—such a lazy boy, I wish he'd never been born—Sponger!—Are you going so soon, Miss?

CLEM. I am curious to know what's happened on the Anna.

KNEIR. Yes—I was on the way there—but it takes so long—and I've had my fill of waiting on the pier—if that pier could only talk. Have you finished my brother's portrait?

CLEM. Tomorrow. I want to make a drawing of Barend also—just as he came in with the basket on his shoulders.

KNEIR. Barend? Well—All the same to me.

CLEM. He doesn't seem to get much petting around here.

KNEIR. [Annoyed.] Pet him! I should say not! The sooner I get rid of him, the better! [Through the window.] Chase them away! Kischt! Kischt!

BAR. [Outside.] All that yelling makes the rooster afraid.

KNEIR. Afraid! He takes after you, then! Kischt!

CLEM. Hahaha! Hahaha! Say, he's enjoying himself there on Ari's roof.

Jo. [Coming through the door at left. Brown apron—gold head pieces on the black band around her head.] Good day.

KNEIR. The chickens are out again! The rooster is sitting on Ari's roof.

Jo. [Laughing merrily.] Hahaha! He's not going to lay eggs there!

KNEIR. [Crossly.] Hear her talk! She knows well enough we almost came to blows with Ari because the hens walked in his potato patch.

Jo. I let them out myself, old cross patch—Truus dug their potatoes yesterday.

KNEIR. Why didn't you say so then?

Jo. What am I doing now? Oh, Miss—she would die if she couldn't grumble; she even keeps it up in her sleep. Last night she swore out loud in her dreams. Hahaha! Never mind! scold all you like; you're a good old mother just the same. [To BAREND, who enters the room.] Ach, you poor thing! Is the rooster setting on the roof? And does he refuse to come down?

BAR. You quit that now!

Jo. I'll wager if you pet the hens he will come down of himself from jealousy. Hahaha! He looks pale with fear.

CLEM. Now, now.

Jo. Say, Aunt, you should make a baker of him. His little bare feet in the rye flour. Hahaha!

BAR. You can all—[Goes angrily off at left.]

Jo. [Calling after him.] The poor little fellow!

CLEM. Now, stop teasing him. Are you digging potatoes?

Jo. Tja; since four o'clock this morning. Nothing—Aunt—all rotten.

KNEIR. We poor people are surely cursed—rain—rain—the crops had to rot—they couldn't be saved—and so we go into the winter—the cruel winter—Ach,—Ach,—Ach!

Jo. There! You're worrying again. Come, Mother, laugh. Am I ever sad? Geert may return at any moment.

KNEIR. Geert—and what then?

Jo. What then? Then—then—then, nothing! Cheer up! You don't add to your potatoes by fretting and grumbling. I have to talk like this all day to keep up her spirits—See, I caught a rabbit!

CLEM. In a trap!

Jo. As neat as you please. The rascal was living

on our poverty—the trap went snap as I was digging. A fat one—forty cents at the least.

CLEM. That came easy—I must go now.

BOS. [At door.] Hello! Are you going to stay all day—May I come in?

KNEIR. [Friendly manner.] Of course you may, Meneer; come in, Meneer.

BOS. My paws are dirty, children.

KNEIR. That's nothing. A little dry sand doesn't matter—will you sit down?

BOS. Glad to do so—Yes, Kneir, my girl, we're getting older every day—Good day, little niece.

JO. Good day, Meneer. [Points, laughing, to her hands.] You see—

BOS. Have you put on gloves for the dance?

JO. [Nods saucily.] The hornpipe and the Highland fling, hey?

BOS. Hahaha! Saucy black eye. [To CLEMENTINE.] Come, let me have a look.

CLEM. [Petulantly.] No, you don't understand it, anyway.

BOS. Oh, thanks!—You educate a daughter. Have her take drawing lessons, but must not ask to see—come! Don't be so childish!

CLEM. [With spoiled petulance.] No. When it is finished.

BOS. Just one look.

CLEM. Hey, Pa, don't bother me.

BOS. Another scolding, ha ha ha!

[BAREND enters.]

BAR. [Bashfully.] Good day, Meneer.

BOS. Well, Barend, you come as if you were called.

BAR. [Surprised laugh.] I?

BOS. We need you, my boy.

BAR. Yes, Meneer.

Bos. The deuce! How you have grown.

BAR. Yes, Meneer.

Bos. You're quite a man, now—How long have you been out of a job?

BAR. [Shyly.] Nine months.

KNEIR. That's a lie—It's more than a year.

BAR. No, it isn't.

Jo. Well, just count up—November, December—

Bos. That'll do, children. No quarreling. Life is too short. Well, Barend, how would the forty-seven suit you?—Eh, what?—

BAR. [Anxiously.] The forty-seven—

Bos. The Good Hope—

CLEM. [Surprised.] Are you going to send out the Good Hope?—

Bos. [Sharply.] You keep out of this! Keep out, I say!

CLEM. And this morning—

Bos. [Angrily.] Clementine!

CLEM. But Pa—

Bos. [Angrily stamping his foot.] Will you please go on?

CLEM. [Shrugging her shoulders.] Hey! How contemptible, to get mad—how small—Bonjour! [Exits.]

KNEIR. Good day, Miss.

Bos. [Smiling.] A cat, eh! Just like her Mama, I have to raise the devil now and then,—hahaha!—or my wife and daughter would run the business—and I would be in the kitchen peeling the potatoes, hahaha! Not but what I've done it in my youth.

KNEIR. And don't I remember—

Bos. [Smacking his lips.] Potatoes and fresh herring! but what's past is gone. With a fleet of eight luggers your mind is on other things—[Smiling.] Even if I do like the sight of saucy black

eyes—Don't mind me, I'm not dangerous—there was a time.—Hahaha!

KNEIR. Go on, Meneer. Don't mind us.

Bos. Well, our little friend here, what does he say?

KNEIR. Open your mouth, speak!

BAR. I would rather—

KNEIR. [Angrily.] Rather—rather!

Jo. Hey! What a stupid!—

Bos. Children! No quarreling. Boy, you must decide for yourself. Last year at the herring catch the Good Hope made the sum of fourteen hundred guilders in four trips. She is fully equipped, Hengst is skipper—all the sailors but one—and the boys—Hengst spoke of you for oldest boy.

BAR. [Nervously.] No, no, Meneer—

KNEIR. Ah, the obstinate beast! All my beating won't drive him aboard.

Jo. If I were a man—

Bos. Yes, but you're not; you're a pretty girl—ha, ha, ha! We can't use such sailors. Well, Daddy! And why don't you want to go? Afraid of seasickness? You've already made one trip as middle boy—

KNEIR. And as play boy.

Jo. He'd rather loaf and beg. Ah! what a big baby.

Bos. You are foolish, boy. I sailed with your grandfather. Yes, I, too, would rather have sat by Mother's pap-pot than held eels with my ice cold hands; rather bitten into a slice of bread and butter than bitten off the heads of the bait. And your father—

BAR. [Hoarsely.] My father was drowned—and brother Hendrick—and Josef—no, I won't go!

Bos. [Rising.] Well—if he feels that way—bet-

ter not force him, Mother Kneirtje; I understand how he feels, my father didn't die in his bed, either—but if you begin to reason that way the whole fishery goes up the spout.

KNEIR. [Angrily.] It's enough to—

Bos. Softly—softly—You don't catch tipsy herrings with force—

Jo. [Laughing.] Tipsy herring, I would like to see that!

Bos. [Laughing.] She doesn't believe it, Kneir! We know better! Eh, what!

KNEIR. Ach—it's no joking matter, Meneer, that miserable bad boy talks as if—as if—I had forgotten my husband—and my good Josef—and—and—but I have not. [Ends in low sobbing.]

Jo. Come, foolish woman! please, Aunty dear!—Good-for-nothing Torment!

Bos. Don't cry, Kneir! Tears will not restore the dead to life—

KNEIR. No, Meneer—I know that, Meneer. Next month it will be twelve years since the Clementine went down.

Bos. Yes, it was the Clementine.

KNEIR. November—'88—He was a monkey of seven then, and yet he pretends to feel more than I do about it.

BAR. [Nervously.] I didn't say that. I don't remember my father, nor my brothers—but—but—

Bos. Well, then?

BAR. I want another trade—I don't want to go to sea—no—no—

KNEIR. Another trade—What else can you do? Can't even read or write—

BAR. Is that my fault?

KNEIR. No—it is mine, of course! Three years I had an allowance—the first year three—the second

two twenty-five—and the third one dollar—the other nine I had to root around for myself.

Bos. Have you forgotten me entirely?

KNEIR. I shall always be grateful to you, Meneer. If you and the priest hadn't given me work and a warm bite now and then to take home—then—then—and that booby even reproaches me!—

BAR. I don't reproach—I—I—

JO. Out with it! The gentleman is looking for a place to live off his income.

BAR. Shut up!—I will do anything—dig sand—plant broom—salting down—I'll be a mason, or a carpenter—or errand boy—

JO. Or a burgomaster! Or a policeman! Hahaha! And walk about dark nights to catch thieves—Oh!—Oh!—what a brave man!

Bos. Little vixen!

BAR. You make me tired!—Did I complain when the salt ate the flesh off my paws so I couldn't sleep nights with the pain?

KNEIR. Wants to be a carpenter—the boy is insane—A mason—see the accidents that happen to masons. Each trade has something.

Bos. Yes, Barendje—There are risks in all trades—my boy. Just think of the miners, the machinists, the stokers—the—the—How often do not I, even now, climb the man rope, or row out to a lugger? Fancies, my boy! You must not give way to them.

KNEIR. And we have no choice. God alone knows what the winter will be. All the potatoes rotted late this fall, Meneer.

Bos. Yes, all over the district. Well, boy?

BAR. No, Meneer.

KNEIR. [Angrily.] Get out of my house, then—sponger!

BAR. [Faintly.] Yes, Mother.

KNEIR. March! Or I'll—[Threatening.]

Bos. Come, come. [A pause during which BARND walks timidly away.]

Jo. If I had a son like that—

Bos. Better get a lover first—

Jo. [Brightly.] I've already got one!—If I had a son like that I'd bang him right and left! Bah! A man that's afraid! [Lightly.] A sailor never knows that sooner or later—He never thinks of that—If Geert were that way—there, I know—Aunt, imagine—Geert—

Bos. Geert!—

Jo. He'd face the devil—eh, Aunt? Now, I'm going to finish the potatoes. Good bye, Meneer.

Bos. Say, black eyes—do you laugh all the time?

Jo. [With burst of laughter.] No, I'm going to cry. [Calls back from the opened door.] Aunt—speak of Geert. [Goes off.]

Bos. Geert!—Is that your son, who—

KNEIR. Yes, Meneer.

Bos. Six months?

KNEIR. Yes, Meneer.

Bos. Insubordination?

KNEIR. Yes, Meneer—Couldn't keep his hands at home.

Bos. The stupid blockhead!

KNEIR. I think they must have teased him—

Bos. That's nonsense! They don't tease the marines. A fine state of affairs. Discipline would be thrown overboard to the sharks if sailors could deal out blows every time things didn't go to suit them.

KNEIR. That's so, Meneer, but—

Bos. And is she—smitten with that good-for-nothing?

KNEIR. She's crazy about him, and well she may be. He's a handsome lad, takes after his father—and strong—there is his photograph—he still wore the uniform then—first class—now he is—

Bos. Degraded!—

KNEIR. No, discharged—when he gets out. He's been to India twice—it is hard—if he comes next week—or in two weeks—or tomorrow, I don't know when—I'll have him to feed, too—although—I must say it of him, he won't let the grass grow under his feet—A giant like him can always find a skipper.

Bos. A sweet beast—I tell you right now, Kneir, I'd rather not take him—dissatisfied scoundrels are plenty enough these days—All that come from the Navy, I'm damned if it isn't so—are unruly and I have no use for that kind—Am I not right?

KNEIR. Certainly, Meneer, but my boy—

Bos. There was Jacob—crooked Jacob, the skipper had to discharge him. He was, God save him, dissatisfied with everything—claimed that I cheated at the count—yes—yes—insane. Now he's trying it at Maasluis. We don't stand for any nonsense.

KNEIR. May I send him to the skipper then—or direct to the water bailiff's office?

Bos. Yes, but you tell him—

KNEIR. Yes, Meneer.

Bos. If he comes in time, he can go out on the Good Hope. She's just off the docks. They are bringing the provisions and casks aboard now. She'll come back with a full cargo—You know that.

KNEIR. [Glad.] Yes, Meneer.

Bos. Well—Good bye! [Murmur of voices outside.] What's that?

KNEIR. People returning from the harbor. There's a corpse aboard the Anna.

Bos. Pieterse's steam trawler—The deuce! Who is it?

KNEIR. I don't know. I'm going to find out.

[Both go off—the stage remains empty—a vague murmur of voices outside. Fishermen, in conversation, pass the window. Sound of a tolling church bell. GEERT sneaks inside through the door at left. Throws down a bundle tied in a red handkerchief. Looks cautiously into the bedsteads, the cooking shed, peers through the window, then muttering he plumps down in a chair by the table, rests his head on his hand, rises again; savagely takes a loaf of bread from the back cupboard, cuts off a hunk. Walks back to chair, chewing, lets the bread fall; wrathfully stares before him. The bell ceases to toll.]

BAR. [From the cooking shed.] Who's there?—Geert!—[Entering.]

GEERT. [Curtly.] Yes—it's me—Well, why don't you give me a paw.

BAR. [Shaking hands.] Have you—have you seen Mother yet?

GEERT. [Curtly.] No, where is she—

BAR. Mother, she—she—

GEERT. What are you staring at?

BAR. You—you—Have you been sick?

GEERT. Sick? I'm never sick.

BAR. You look so—so pale—

GEERT. Give me the looking-glass. I'll be damned. What a mug! [Throws the mirror roughly down.]

BAR. [Anxiously.] Was it bad in prison?

GEERT. No, fine!—What a question—They feed you on beefsteaks! Is there any gin in the house?

BAR. No.

GEERT. Go and get some then—if I don't have a swallow, I'll keel over.

BAR. [Embarrassed.] I haven't any money.

GEERT. I have. [Peers in his pocket, throws a handful of coins on the table.] Earned that in prison—There!—

BAR. At the "Red" around the corner?

GEERT. I don't care a damn—so you hurry. [Calling after him.] Is—is Mother well? [A pause.] —and Jo?

BAR. [At door.] She is digging potatoes.

GEERT. Are they mad at me?

BAR. Why?

GEERT. Because I—[Savagely.] Don't stare so, stupid—

BAR. [Embarrassed.] I can't get used to your face—it's so queer.

GEERT. Queer face, eh! I must grow a beard at once!—Say, did they make a devil of a row? [Gruffly.] Well?—

BAR. I don't know.

GEERT. Go to the devil! You don't know anything.

[A pause, BAREND slips out. Jo enters, a dead rabbit in her hand.]

Jo. Jesus! [Lets the rabbit fall.]—Geert! [Rushes to him, throws her arms about his neck, sobbing hysterically.]

GEERT. [In a muffled voice.] Stop it! Stop your damned bawling—stop!

Jo. [Continuing to sob.] I am so happy—so happy, dear Geert—

GEERT. [Irritated.] Now! Now!

Jo. I can't help it. [Sobs harder.]

GEERT. [Pulling her arms from his neck.]—Now then! My head can't stand such a lot of noise—

Jo. [Startled.] A lot of noise?

GEERT. [Grumbling.] You don't understand it of course—six months solitary—in a dirty, stinking

cell. [*Puts his hand before his eyes as if blinded by the light.*] Drop the curtain a bit—This sunshine drives me mad!

JO. My God—Geert—

GEERT. Please!—that's better.

JO. Your beard—

GEERT. They didn't like my beard—The government took that—become ugly, haven't I?—Look as if I'd lost my wits? Eh?

JO. [With hesitating laugh.] You? No—What makes you think that? You don't show it at all. [Sobs again softly.]

GEERT. Well, damn it! Is that all you have to say. [She laughs hysterically. He points to his temples.] Become grey, eh?

JO. No, Geert.

GEERT. You lie. [Kicking away the mirror.] I saw it myself. The beggars; to shut up a sailor in a cage where you can't walk, where you can't speak, where you—[Strikes wildly upon the table with his fist.]

BAR. Here is the gin.

JO. The gin?

BAR. For Geert.

GEERT. Don't you meddle with this—Where is a glass?—Never mind—[Swallows eagerly.]—That's a bracer! What time is it?

BAR. Half past four.

JO. Did you take bread? Were you hungry?

GEERT. Yes, no—no, yes. I don't know. [Puts the bottle again to his lips.]

JO. Please, Geert—no more—you can't stand it.

GEERT. No more! [Swallows.] Ripping!—Hahaha! That's the best way to tan your stomach. [Swallows.] Ripping! Don't look so unhappy, girl

—I won't get drunk! Bah! It stinks! Not accustomed to it—Are there any provisions on board?

Jo. Look—a fat one, eh? Trapped him myself. [Picks up the rabbit.] Not dead an hour.

GEERT. That will do for tomorrow—Here, you, go and lay in a supply—some ham and some meat—

BAR. Meat, Geert?

Jo. No—that's extravagance—if you want to buy meat, keep your money till Sunday.

GEERT. Sunday—Sunday—if you hadn't eaten anything for six months but rye bread, rats, horse beans—I'm too weak to set one foot before the other. Stop your talk—Hurry up! and—and a piece of cheese—I feel like eating myself into a colic. Ha-haha! Shall I take another wee drop?

[BAREND goes off.]

Jo. No.

GEERT. Good, not another drop. Is there any tobacco?

Jo. God!—I'm glad to see you cheerful again. Yes, there's some tobacco left—in the jar.

GEERT. That's good. Fine! Is that my old pipe?

Jo. I saved it for you.

GEERT. Who did you flirt with, while I sat—

Jo. [Merrily.] With Uncle Cobus!

GEERT. You women are all trash. [Fills his pipe; smokes.] Haven't had the taste in my mouth for half a year. This isn't tobacco; [Exhales.] tastes like hay—Bah! The gin stinks and the pipe stinks.

Jo. Eat something first—

GEERT. [Laying down the pipe.] Say, do you still sleep with Mother?

Jo. Yes, next to the pig sty.

GEERT. [Laughing.] And must I sleep under the roof again?

JO. You'll sleep nice and warm up there, dear.

KNEIR. [Outside.] Why is the window curtain down?

JO. [Finger on her lips.] Sst! [Goes and stands before GEERT.]

KNEIR. [Inside.] What's going on here? Why is the looking-glass on the floor? Who sits—

GEERT. [Rising.] Well, little old one!

KNEIR. God almighty!

GEERT. No—it's me—Geert—

KNEIR. [Dropping into a chair.] Oh!—Oh!—My heart beats so!

GEERT. Hahaha! That's damned good! [Tries to embrace her.]

KNEIR. No—no—not yet—later.

GEERT. Not yet!—Why later?

KNEIR. [Reproachfully.] You—what have you done to make me happy!

JO. [Coaxingly.] Never mind that now—

GEERT. I've got enough in my head now. If you intend to reproach me?—I shall—

KNEIR. You shall—

GEERT. Pack my bundle!—

KNEIR. And this is his home-coming!

GEERT. Do you expect me to sit on the sinner's bench? No, thank you.

KNEIR. [Anxious; almost crying.] The whole village talked about you—I couldn't go on an errand but—

GEERT. [Curtly.] Let them that talk say it to my face. I'm no thief or burglar.

KNEIR. No, but you raised your hand against your superior.

GEERT. [Fiercely.] I should have twisted my fingers in his throat.

KNEIR. Boy—boy ; you make us all unhappy.

[*Begins to sob.*]

GEERT. [Stamping.] Treated like a beast, then I get the devil besides. [Grabs his bundle.] I'm in no mood to stand it. [At the door, hesitates, throws down his bundle.] Now! [Lower voice.] Don't cry, Mother—I would rather—Damn it!

Jo. Please—Auntie dear—

KNEIR. Your father lies somewhere in the sea. Never would he have looked at you again—And he also had a great deal to put up with.

GEERT. I'm glad I'm different—not so submissive —It's a great honor to let them walk over you! I have no fish blood in me—Now then, is it to go on raining?

KNEIR. [Embracing him.] If you would only repent.

GEERT. [Flaring up.] I'd knock the teeth out of his jaw tomorrow.

KNEIR. How did it happen?

Jo. Hey! Yes—tell us all about it. Come, now, sit down peaceably.

GEERT. I've sat long enough, hahaha!—Let me walk to get the hang of it. [Lighting his pipe again.] Bah!

Jo. Stop smoking then, donkey!

GEERT. Now I'll—But for you it would never have happened—

Jo. [Laughing.] But for me?—that's a good one!

GEERT. I warned you against him.

Jo. Against who—What are you talking about?

GEERT. That cad—Don't you remember dancing with him at the tavern van de Rooie?

Jo. I?—Danced?—

GEERT. The night before we sailed.

JO. With that cross-eyed quartermaster?—I don't understand a word of it—was it with him?—And you yourself wanted me to—

GEERT. You can't refuse a superior—On board ship he had stories. I overheard him tell the skipper that he—

JO. [Angrily.] What?

GEERT. That he—never mind what—He spoke of you as if you were any sailor's girl.

JO. I!—The low down—

GEERT. When he came into the hold after the dog watch, I hammered him on the jaw with a marlin spike. Five minutes later I sat in irons. Kept in them six days—[Sarcastically.] the provost was full; then two weeks provost; six months solitary; and suspended from the navy for ten years; that, damn me, is the most—I'd chop off my two hands to get back in; to be nigger-driven again; cursed as a beggar again; ruled as a slave again—

KNEIR. Geert—Geert—Don't speak such words. In the Bible it stands written—

GEERT. [Grimly.] Stands written—if there was only something written for us—

KNEIR. Shame on you—

JO. Well, wasn't he in the right?

KNEIR. If he had gone politely to the Commander—

GEERT. Hahaha! You should have been a sailor, Mother—Hahaha! Politely? They were too glad of the chance to clip and shear me. While I was in the provost they found newspapers in my bag I was not allowed to read—and pamphlets I was not allowed to read—that shut the door—otherwise they would have given me only third class—

KNEIR. Newspapers you were not allowed to read? Then why did you read them?

GEERT. Why—simple soul—Ach!—when I look at your submissive face I see no way to tell why—Why do men desert?—Why, ten days before this happened to me, did Peter the stoker cut off his two fingers?—Just for a joke? No, on purpose! I can't blame you people—you knew no better—and I admired the uniform—But now that I've got some brains I would like to warn every boy that binds himself for fourteen years to murder.

KNEIR. To murder? Boy, don't say such dreadful things—you are excited—

GEERT. Excited? No—not at all—worn out, in fact—in Atjeh I fought with the rest—stuck my bayonet into the body of a poor devil till the blood spurted into my eyes—For that they gave me the Atjeh medal. I have it still in my bundle. Hand it here. [Jo picks up the bundle; BAREND looks on.] Where is the thing? [Jerks the medal from his jacket, throws it out of the window.] Away! you have dangled on my breast long enough!

KNEIR. Geert! Geert! Who has made you like this! I no longer know you—

GEERT. Who—who took an innocent boy, that couldn't count ten, and kidnaped him for fourteen years? Who drilled and trained him for a dog's life? Who put him in irons when he defended his girl? Irons—you should have seen me walking in them, groaning like an animal. Near me walked another animal with irons on his leg, because of an insolent word to an officer of the watch. Six days with the damned irons on your claws and no power to break them. Six days lower than a beast.

JO. Don't talk about it any more, you are still so tired—

GEERT. [Wrapped in the grimness of his story.] Then the provost, that stinking, dark cage; your pig sty is a palace to it. A cage with no windows—no air—a cage where you can't stand or lie down. A cage where your bread and water is flung to you with a “there, dog, eat!” There was a big storm in those days,—two sloops were battered to pieces;—when you expected to go to the bottom any moment. Never again to see anyone belongin' to me—neither you—nor you—nor you. To go down in that dark, stinking hole with no one to talk to—no comrade's hand!—No, no, let me talk—it lightens my chest! Another drop. [Drinks quickly.] From the provost to the court martial. A fellow has lots to bring in there. Your mouth shut. Sit up; mouth shut some more. Gold epaulettes sitting in judgment on the trash God has kicked into the world to serve, to salute, to—

KNEIR. Boy—boy—

GEERT. Six months—six months in a cell for reformation. To be reformed by eating food you could not swallow;—rye bread, barley, pea soup, rats! Three months I pasted paper bags, and when I saw the chance I ate the sour paste from hunger. Three months I sorted peas; you'll not believe it, but may I never look on the sea again if I lie. At night, over my gas light, I would cook the peas I could nip in my slop pail. When the handle became too hot to hold any longer, I ate them half boiled—to fill my stomach. That's to reform you—reform you—for losing your temper and licking a blackguard that called your girl a vile name, and reading newspapers you were not allowed to read.

KNEIR. [Anxiously.] That was unjust.

GEERT. Unjust! How dare you say it! Fresh from the sea—in a cell—no wind and no water, and

no air—one small high window with grating like a partridge cage. The foul smell and the nights—the damned nights, when you couldn't sleep. When you sprang up and walked, like an insane man, back and forth—back and forth—four measured paces. The nights when you sat and prayed not to go insane—and cursed everything, everything, everything! [Drops his head upon his hands.]

JO. [After a long pause goes to him and throws her arms about his neck. KNEIRTJE weeps, BAREND stands dazed:] Geert!

GEERT. Now! Don't let us—[Forcibly controlling his tears.] A light! [Smokes.] Now, Mother! [Goes to the window—says to BAREND.] Lay out the good things—[Draws up the curtain.] I'll be damned! if the rooster isn't sitting on the roof again, ha, ha, ha! will you believe it? I would like to sail at once—two days on the Sea! the Sea! the Sea!—and I'm my old self again. What!—Why is Truus crying as she walks by? Truus! [Calling.]

KNEIR. Ssst!—Don't call after her. The Anna has just come in without her husband. [A few sad-looking, low-speaking women walk past the window.] Poor thing! Six children—

GEERT. Is Ari—[She nods.] That's damned sad! [Drops the window curtain, stands in somber thought.]

CURTAIN.

## ACT II.

[*Same Room. Time—Early Afternoon.*]

Jo. [By the table.] Hey!

MARIETJE. [Entering.] They haven't come yet?

SIMON. No, they haven't come yet. [Starting to go.]

Jo. Are you running away again?

SIMON. That is to say—

MARIETJE. Good gracious, father, do stay awhile.

SIMON. Yes—I won't go far—I must—

MARIETJE. You must nothing—

SIMON. Well, Salamander, am I a child? I must—I must— [Abruptly off.]

MARIETJE. Stop it if you can. It begins early in the morning.

Jo. Is he bad again?

MARIETJE. You should have seen him day before yesterday—half the village at his heels. Ach! Ach! When Mother was living he didn't dare. She used to slap his face for him when he smelled of gin—just let me try it.

Jo. [Bursting into a laugh.] You say that as though—ha ha ha! Mees ought to hear that.

MARIETJE. I never have seen Mees drinking—and father very seldom formerly. Ah well—I can't put a cork in his mouth, nor lead him around by a rope. [Looks through the window.] Gone, of course—to the Rooie. Horrid old drunkard. How old is Kneirtje today?

Jo. Sixty-one. Young for her years, isn't she, eh? Sit down and tell me [Merrily.] when are you going to be married?

MARIETJE. That depends on the length of the voyage. You know we would like to marry at once [*Smiles, hesitates.*] because—because— Well, you understand. But Mees had to send for his papers first—that takes two weeks—by that time he is far out at sea; now five weeks—five little weeks will pass quickly enough.

Jo. [Joyfully confidential.] We shall be married in December.

MARIETJE. That's about the same— Are you two?— Now?— I told you everything—

[*Jo shrugs her shoulders and laughs.*]

KNEIR. [Entering.] Laughing as usual.

MARIETJE. [Kissing her.] May you live to be a hundred—

KNEIR. God forbid!—a hundred years. I haven't the money for that! [*Opening a bag.*] You may try one—you, too—gingerbread nuts—no, not two, you, with the grab-all fingers! For each of the boys a half pound gingerbread nuts—and a half pound chewing tobacco—and a package of cigars. Do you know what I'm going to give Barend since he has become so brave—look—

Jo. Now—you should give those to Geert—

KNEIR. No, I'm so pleased with the lad that he has made up his mind I want to reward him.

MARIETJE. Did you buy them?

KNEIR. No, indeed! These are ever so old, they are earrings. My husband wore them Sundays, when he was at home.

MARIETJE. There are little ships on them—masts—and sails—I wish I had them for a brooch.

Jo. Why give them to that coward? That's not right.

MARIETJE. You had a time getting him to sign— Eh!

KNEIR. Yes—yes. But he was willing to go with his brother—and now take it home to yourself—a boy that is not strong—not very strong—rejected for the army, and a boy who heard a lot about his father and Josef.

JO. I just can't stand that! First you curse and scold at him, and now nothing is too good.

KNEIR. Even so, no matter what has been. In an hour he will be gone, and you must never part in anger. Have a sweet dram, Marietje. We have fresh wafers and ginger cakes all laid in for my birthday—set it all ready, Jo. Saart is coming soon, and the boys may take a dram, too.

COBUS. [Through the window. DAANTJE with him.]

A sweet young Miss  
And a glass of Anis—  
I shall surely come in for this.

KNEIR. Throw your chew away before you come in.

COB. Indeed I'll not! [Hides it in his red handkerchief.] No—now—you know what I want to say.

DAAN. Same here. Same here.

JO. I don't need to ask if— [Pours the dram.]

COB. No—no—go ahead—just a little more.

JO. There!—now it is running over.

COB. No matter, I shan't spill a drop. [Bends trembling to the table. Lips to the glass, sucks up the liquor.] He, he, he!

DAAN. Ginger cake? If you please. [Yawns.]

MARIETJE. [Imitating his yawn.] Ah! Thanks!

DAAN. When you have my years!— Hardly slept a wink last night—and no nap this afternoon.

JO. Creep into the bedstead.

COB. That's what he would like to do—

MARIETJE. Better take a hot bottle, Daan!

COB. Now, if I had my choice—

KNEIR. Hold your tongue—Story teller! The Matron at the Home has to help dress him. And yet he—

JO. Ha, ha, ha! Oh, Uncle Cobus!

MARIETJE. Oh! Oh! Hahaha!

COB. Tja! the Englishman says: "The old man misses the kisses, and the young man kisses the misses." Do you know what that means?

JO. Yes, that means, "Woman, take your cat inside, its beginning to rain." Hahaha! Hahaha!

SAART. [Through door at left.] Good day! Congratulations everybody!

COB. Come in.

SAART. Good day, Daantje; day, Cobus; and day, Marietje; and day, Jo. No, I'll not sit down.

KNEIR. A dram—

SAART. No, I'll not sit down. My kettle is on the fire.

JO. Come now!

SAART. No, I'm not going to do it—my door is ajar—and the cat may tip over the oil stove. No, just give it to me this way—so—so—many happy returns, and may your boys— Where are the boys?

KNEIR. Geert has gone to say good bye, and Barend has gone with Mees to take the mattresses and chests in the yawl. They'll soon be here, for they must be on board by three o'clock.

SAART. Hey, this burns my heart out. [Refers to the anisette.] Were you at Leen's yesterday?

KNEIR. No, couldn't go.

SAART. There was a lot of everything and more too. The bride was full,—three glasses "roses with-

out thorns," two of "perfect love," and surely four glasses of "love in a mist." Well! Where she stowed it all I don't know.

COB. Give me the old fashioned dram, brandy and syrup—eh! Daantje?

DAANTJE. [Startled.] What?

KNEIR. He's come here to sleep—you look as if you hadn't been to bed at all.

COB. In his bed—he, he, he!

DAAN. [Crossly.] Come, no jokes.

COB. Hehehe! [Takes out his handkerchief.]

KNEIR. No, I say, don't take out your chew.

SAART. Old snooper!

COB. Snooper? No, you'd never guess how I got it. Less than ten minutes ago I met Bos the ship-owner, and he gave me—he gave me a little white roll—of—of tissue paper with tobacco inside. What do you call the things?

MARIETJE. Cigarettes.

COB. Yes, catch me smoking a thing like that in—in paper—that's a chew with a shirt on.

SAART. And you're a crosspatch without a shirt. No, I'm not going to sit down.

JO. It's already poured out.

SIMON. [Drunk.] Day.

KNEIR. Day, Simon—shove in, room for you here.

SIMON. [Plumps down by door at left.] I'll sit here.

COB. Have a sweet dram?

MARIETJE. No.

SIMON. [Huskily.] Why no?

MARIETJE. You've had enough.

SIMON. Have I? Salamanders!

MARIETJE. No, I won't have it.

KNEIR. Did you see Geert?

SIMON. [Muttering.] Wh—wh— Geert!

COB. Give him just one, for a parting cup.

MARIETJE. [Angrily.] No! No!

SIMON. [Thickly.] No! I'll be damned! [Lights a nose warmer.]

KNEIR. Is there much work in the dry dock, Simon?

SIMON. That stands fast.

SAART. Well—I'm going.

JO. Hey! How unsociable! They'll soon be here. Come sit down—

SAART. No, if I sit down I stay too long. Well then, half a glass—no—no cookies.

GEERT. [Through door at left.] It looks like all hands on deck here! Good day, everybody! [Pointing to SIMON.] Lazarus! Eh, Simon?

SIMON. [Muttering.] Uh—ja—

MARIETJE. Let him alone.

GEERT. The deuce, but you're touchy! We've got a quarter of an hour, boys! Pour out the drinks, Jo. [Sits between KNEIR. and JO.] Here's to you, Mother! Prost! Santy, Jo! Santy, Daantje! Santys!

JO. Hahaha! Fallen asleep with a ginger nut in his hand.

KNEIR. Isn't he well?

COB. No. Sick in the night—afraid to call the matron; walked about in his bare feet; got chilled.

GEERT. Afraid of the Matron! Are you eating charity bread?

COB. It's easy for you to talk, but if you disturb her, she keeps you in for two weeks.

GEERT. Poor devils—I don't want to live to be so old.

JO. Oh, real sweet of you. We're not even married yet—and he's a widower already!

GEERT. [Gaily.] There's many a slip! Hahaha!

Shall I give him a poke? I don't need a belaying pin— [Sings.]

"Sailing, sailing, don't wait to be called;  
Starboard watch, spring from your bunk;  
Let the man at the wheel go to his rest;  
The rain is good and the wind is down.  
It's sailing, it's sailing,  
It's sailing for the starboard watch."

[*The others join him in beating time on the table with their fists.*]

Hahaha! [General laugh.]

DAAN. [Awakes with a start.] You'll do the same when you're as old as I am.

GEERT. Hahaha! I'll never be old. Leaky ships must sink.

JO. Now, Geert.

SAART. Never be old! You might have said that a while back when you looked like a wet dish rag. But now! Prison life agreed with you, boy!

COB. Hehehe! Now we can make up a song about you, pasting paper bags—just as Domela—he he he! [Sings in a piping voice.]

My nevvy Geert pastes paper bags,  
Hi-ha, ho!  
My nevvy Geert—

SAART. Pastes paper bags.

DAAN., JO., MARIETJE and COBUS. Hi—ha—ho!

GEERT. [Laughing.] Go to thunder! You're making a joke of it!

KNEIR. [Anxiously.] Please don't be so noisy. It isn't best.

JO. Oh! I expected that! This is your birthday, see! Do take a chair, Saart.

SAART. Chair. I'm blest if I see—

MARIETJE. I don't mind standing.

SAART. No—there's room here. [Squeezes in beside COBUS.]

COB. I'll be falling off here!

MARIETJE. [Standing beside her dazed father.] Father!

SIMON. [Muttering.] They must—they must—not—not—that's fast.

MARIETJE. Come, now!

GEERT. Let the man sail his own mast overboard! He isn't in the way.

SIMON. [With dazed gesture.] You must—you must—

MARIETJE. [Crossly.] What's the matter now?

SIMON. [Mumbling.] The ribs—and—and—[Firmly.] That's fast!—

GEERT, JO., COBUS, DAANTJE and SAART. Ha, ha, ha! Ha, ha, ha!

MEES. [Enters.] Salute!

KNEIR. [Anxiously.] Are you alone? Where's Barend?

MEES. I don't know.

KNEIR. You went together to take the mattresses and chests—

MEES. Row with the skipper! He's no sailor!

JO. A row? Has the trouble begun already?

MEES. Can't repeat a word of it—afraid—afraid—always afraid— [To MARIETJE, who has induced her father to rise.] Are you coming along?

JO. No, take a dram before you go. It's Aunt's birthday.

MEES. You don't say! Now—now—Kneir, many happy returns.

KNEIR. You have made me anxious.

JO. [Laughing.] Anxious!

KNEIR. Yes, anxious! She's surprised at that. I've taken an advance from Bos.

**GEERT.** He's signed, hasn't he? Don't worry, Mother!

**COB.** Perhaps he's saying good-bye to his girl. [Sound of JELLE's fiddle outside.] Ta, de, da!

**SAART.** Do sit still—one would think you'd eaten horse flesh.

**DAAN.** They give us meat? Not even a dead cat!

**JELLE.** [Playing the old polka.] If you please!

**GEERT.** Come on in, old man!

**JO.** Poor old fellow, gets blinder every day.

**JELLE.** [Playing.] I come regular once a week.

**GEERT.** Another tune first, Old Man! Not that damned old polka.

**JO.** Yes, play that tune of— of— what do you call 'em?

**COB.** Yes, the one she mentions is fine.

**SAART.** You know, Jelle, the one—that one that goes [Sings.] "I know a song that charms the heart."

**MEES.** Say! Give us——[JELLE begins the *Mar-sellaise*.] That's better fare. [Sings.] "Aloose—vodela—bedeije—deboe—debie—de boolebie."

**MARIETJE.** Hahaha! That's the French of a dead codfish!

**JO.** Hahaha!

**MEES.** Laugh all you please! I've laid in a French port—and say, it was first rate! When I said pain they gave me bread—and when I said "open the port," they opened the door. Great!

**GEERT.** All Gammon! Begin again, Jelle. Why the devil! Let's use the Dutch words we've got for it.

[JELLE begins again. GEERT roars.]

"Arise men, brothers, all united!  
Arise burgers, come join with us!  
Your wrongs, your sorrows be avenged"—

Bos. [Who has stood at the open window listening during the singing, yells angrily.] What's going on here! [Scared hush over all.] Damn it! It's high time you were all on board! [Goes off furious.]

KNEIR. [After a long pause.] Oh— Oh—how he scared me—he! he!

JO. What's the matter with him?

MEES. I couldn't think where the voice came from.

SAART. How stupid of you to roar like a weaned pig, when you know Meneer Bos lives only two doors away.

MARIETJE. Lord, wasn't he mad.

COB. Hehehe! You'll never eat a sack of salt with him.

KNEIR. What business had you to sing those low songs, anyway?

GEERT. Well, I'll be damned! Am I in my own house or not? If he hadn't taken me by surprise! An old frog like that before your eyes of a sudden. I'd cleaned out his cupboard! Play on, Jelle!

[JELLE begins again.]

KNEIR. Ach, please don't, Geert. I'm afraid that if Meneer Bos—— [Motions to JELLE to stop.]

GEERT. This one is afraid to sail, this one of the Matron of the Old Men's Home, this one of a little ship owner! Forbids me in my own house! Commands me as though I were a servant!

SAART. Fun is fun, but if you were a ship owner, you wouldn't want your sailors singing like socialists either.

KNEIR. When he knows how dependent I am, too.

GEERT. [Passionately.] Dependent! Don't be dependent! Is it an honor to do his cleaning! Why not pay for the privilege! Thank him for letting you scrub! Dependent! For mopping the office floor

and licking his muddy boots you get fifty cents twice a week and the scraps off their plates.

JO. Don't get so angry, foolish boy!

KNEIR. Oh, what a row I'll get Saturday!

GEERT. A row, you? Why should he row with you? If you hadn't all your life allowed this braggart who began with nothing to walk over you and treat you as a slave, while father and my brothers lost their lives on the sea making money for him, you'd give him a scolding and damn his hide for his insolence in opening his jaw.

KNEIR. I—I—God forbid.

GEERT. God forbids you to bend your neck. Here—take it—Jelle. Next year Mother will give you pennies to play. "Arise men, brothers, all unite-e-ed"—

KNEIR. Please, Geert, please don't. [Lays her hand on his mouth.]

JO. Hey! Stop tormenting your old mother on her birthday. [JELLE holds out his hand.] Here, you can't stand on one leg.

COB. Do you want money from me? It's all in the bank. [Pointing to Daan.] He's the man to go to.

DAAN. [Crossly, drinking.] Peh! Don't make a fool of me.

JELLE. Well, thanks to you both. [Off.]

MEES. Will you come along now?

GEERT. I'll wait a few minutes for Barend. What's your hurry? The boys will come by here any way.

SAAET. Don't you catch on that those two are—A good voyage.

MEES and MARIETJE. [Shaking hands.] Good voyage!

KNEIR. Half past two—I'm uneasy.

SAAET. Half past two? Have I staid so long—

and my door ajar! Good voyage. Good day, Kneir.  
[Off.]

Bos. [Brusquely coming through the kitchen door.] Are you also planning to stay behind?

GEERT. [Gruffly.] Are you speaking to me?

Bos. [Angrily.] Yes, to you. Skipper Hengst has my orders. Understand?

GEERT. [Calmly to the others.] Gone crazy—

Bos. [More angry.] The police have been notified.

GEERT. [With forced calm.] You and the police make me tired. [COBUS and DAANTJE slink away, stopping outside to listen at the window.] Are you out of your head? Who said I wasn't going?

KNEIR. Yes, Meneer, he is all ready to go.

Bos. That other boy of yours that Hengst engaged—refuses to go.

KNEIR. Oh, good God!

Bos. [To COBUS and DAAN.] Why are you listening? [They bow in a scared way and hastily go on.] This looks like a dive—drunkenness and rioting.

JO. [Excusing.] It's Aunt's birthday.

GEERT. [Angrily.] Mother's birthday or not, we do as we please here.

Bos. You change your tone or—

GEERT. My tone! You get out!

KNEIR. [Anxious.] Ach—dear Geert— Don't take offense, Meneer—he's quick tempered, and in anger one says—

Bos. Things he's no right to say. Dirt is all the thanks you get for being good to you people. [Threatening.] If you're not on board in ten minutes, I'll send the police for you!

GEERT. You send—what do you take me for, any way!

Bos. What I take him for—he asks that—dares

to ask—— [To KNEIRTJE.] You'll come to me again recommending a trouble-maker kicked out by the Navy.

GEERT. [Mocking.] Did you recommend? Hahaha! You make me laugh! You pay wages and I do the work. For the rest you can go to hell.

Bos. You're just a big overgrown boy, that's all!

GEERT. [Threatening.] If it wasn't for Mother—I'd——

KNEIR. [Throwing her arms about him.] Geert! Geert! [A long pause.]

Bos. And this in your house! Good day. [At the door.] Kneir, Kneir, consider well what you do—I gave you an advance in good faith——

KNEIR. Ach, yes, Meneer—Ach, yes——

Bos. Haven't I always treated you well?

KNEIR. Yes, Meneer—you and the priest——

Bos. One of your sons refuses to go, the other—— you'll come to a bad end, my little friend.

GEERT. Haul in your fore sheet! On board I'm a sailor—I'm the skipper here. Such a topsy turvy! A ship owner layin' down the law; don't do this and don't do that! Boring his nose through the window when you don't sing to suit him.

Bos. For my part, sing, but a sensible sailor expecting to marry ought to appreciate it when his employer is looking out for his good. Your father was a thorough good man. Did he ever threaten his employer? You young fellows have no respect for grey hairs.

GEERT. Respect for grey hairs? By thunder, yes! for grey hairs that have become grey in want and misery——

Bos. [Shrugging his shoulders.] Your mother's seen me, as child, standing before the bait trays. I

also have stood in an East wind that froze your ears,  
biting off bait heads—

GEERT. That'll do. We don't care for your stories, Meneer. You have become a rich man, and a tyrant. Good!—you are perhaps no worse than the rest, but don't interfere with me in my own house. My father was a different sort. We may all become different, and perhaps my son may live to see the day when he will come, as I did, twelve years ago, crying to the office, to ask if there's any news of *his* father and *his* two brothers! and not find their employer sitting by his warm fire and his strong box, drinking grog. He may not be damned for coming so often to ask the same thing, nor be turned from the door with snubs and the message, "When there's anything to tell you'll hear of it."

Bos. [Roughly.] You lie—I never did anything of the sort.

GEERT. I won't soil any more words over it. Only to let you know I remember. My father's hair was grey, my mother's hair is grey, Jelle, the poor devil who can't find a place in the Old Men's Home because on one occasion in his life he was light-fingered—Jelle has also grey hairs.

Bos. Fine! Reasoning without head or tail. If you hear him or crooked Jacob, it's the same cuckoo song. [To Kneir.] Its come out, eh? But now I'll give another word of advice, my friend, before you go under sail. You have an old mother, you expect to marry, good; you've been in prison six months—I won't talk of that; you have barked out your insolence to me in your own house, but if you attempt any of this talk on board the Hope you'll find out there is a muster roll.

GEERT. Every year old child knows that.

Bos. When you've become older—and wiser—you'll be ashamed of your insolence—"the ship owner by his warm stove, and his grog"—

GEEBT. And his strong box—

Bos. [Hotly.] And his cares, you haven't the wits to understand! Who feeds you all?

GEEBT. [Forced calmness.] Who hauls the fish out of the sea? Who risks his life every hour of the day? Who doesn't take off his clothes in five or six weeks? Who walks with hands covered with salt sores,—without water to wash face or hands? Who sleep like beasts two in a bunk? Who leave wives and mothers behind to beg alms? Twelve head of us are presently going to sea—we get twenty-five per cent of the catch, you seventy-five. We do the work, you sit safely at home. Your ship is insured, and we—we can go to the bottom in case of accident—we are not worth insuring—

KNEIR. [Soothing.] Geert! Geert! Geert!

Bos. That's an entertaining lad! You should be a clown in a circus! Twenty-seven per cent isn't enough for him—

GEEBT. I'll never eat salted codfish from your generosity! Our whole share is in "profit and loss." When luck is with us we each make eight guilders a week, one guilder a day when we're lucky. One guilder a day at sea, to prepare salt fish, cod with livers for the people in the cities—hahaha!—a guilder a day—when you're lucky and don't go to the bottom. You fellows know what you're about when you engage us on shares.

[Old and young heads of fishermen appear at the window.]

A VOICE. Are you coming? [Bos is politely greeted.]

GEERT. I shall soon follow you.

Bos. Good voyage, men! And say to the skipper—no, never mind—I'll be there myself— [A pause.] Twenty-five minutes past two. Now I'll take two minutes more, blockhead, to rub under your nose something I tried three times to say, but you gave me no chance to get in a word. When you lie in your bunk tonight—as a beast, of course!—try and think of my risks, by a poor catch—lost nets and cordage—by damages and lightning in the mast, by running aground, and God knows what else. The Jacoba's just had her hatches torn off, the Queen Wilhelmina half her bulwarks washed away. You don't count that, for you don't have to pay for it! Three months ago the Expectation collided with a steamer. Without a thought of the catch or the nets, the men sprang overboard, leaving the ship to drift! Who thought of my interests? You laugh, boy, because you don't realize what cares I have. On the Mathilde last week the men smuggled gin and tobacco in their mattresses to sell to the English. Now the ship lies chained. Do you pay the fine?

GEERT. Pluck feathers off a frog's back. Hahaha!

Bos. If you were talking about conditions in Middelharnis or Pernis, you'd have reason for it. My men don't pay the harbor costs, don't pay for bait, towing, provisions, barrels, salt. I don't expect you to pay the loss of the cordage, if a gaff or a boom breaks. I go into my own pocket for it. I gave your mother an advance, your brother Barend deserts.

KNEIR. No, Meneer, I can't believe that.

Bos. Hengst telephoned me from the harbor, else I wouldn't have been here to be insulted by your oldest son, who's disturbing the whole neighborhood roaring his scandalous songs! I'm going to the ship!

[*Angrily.*] If you're not on board on time I'll apply "Article Sixteen" and fine you twenty-five guilders.

GEERT. Yes, why not? I can stand it!

Bos. [Turning to Kneir.] As for you, my wife doesn't need you at present, you're all a bad lot here.

KNEIR. [Anxiously.] Ach, Meneer, it isn't my fault!

GEERT. Must you punish the old woman too?

Bos. Blame your own sons for that! After this voyage you can look for another employer, who enjoys throwing pearls before swine better than I do!

GEERT. And now, get out! Get out! [Pushes the door shut after Bos.]

KNEIR. What a birthday! What a birthday!

Jo. Don't hang your head so soon, Aunt! Geert was in the right—

KNEIR. In the right! What good does that do?

GEERT. You're not running after him?

KNEIR. No, to look for Barend. Great God, if he should desert—if he deserts—he also goes to prison—two sons who—

GEERT. Aren't you going to wish me a good voyage—or don't you think that necessary?

KNEIR. My head is queer. I'm coming to the harbor. Yes, I'm coming—

Jo. I'm sorry for her, the poor thing.

GEERT. He's a hound, that fellow!

Jo. Where's your sou'wester? Hope it isn't mislaid. You gave him a talking to, didn't you? It was drunken Simon that set him going. Now don't look so solemn. Here it is. [Picks a geranium from a flower pot.] There! And you keep it on, so. [On his knee.] And you will think of me every night, will you? Will you? [Springing up.] What, are you back so soon?

KNEIR. [Enters.] Isn't he in here?

GEERT. He's in the pocket of my jacket! Hahaha!

KNEIR. Truus saw him hanging around the house.

Ach! Ach! Ach!

GEERT. We're going! Come along with us. If that coward refuses to go, your sitting at home won't help a damn.

KNEIR. No, no, no.

JO. Follow after us, then!

KNEIR. [Anxiously.] Yes, yes, yes! Don't forget your chewing tobacco and your cigars—

GEERT. [Gaily.] If you're too late—I'll never look at you again!

[*Exeunt GEERT and Jo.*]

BAR. [Entering quickly from left.] S-s-s-st!

KNEIR. You miserable bad boy!

BAR. S-ssst!

KNEIR. What sssst! I'll shout the whole village together if you don't immediately run and follow Geert and Jo.

BAR. [Panting.] If you can keep Geert from going—call him back!

KNEIR. Have you gone crazy with fear, you big coward?

BAR. [Panting.] The Good Hope is no good, no good—her ribs are rotten—the planking is rotten!—

KNEIR. Don't stand there telling stories to excuse yourself. After half past two! March!—

BAR. [Almost crying.] If you don't believe me!

KNEIR. I won't listen. March! or I'll slap your face.

BAR. Strike me then! Strike me then! Ah, God! keep Geert from going! Simon the ship carpenter warned me.

KNEIR. Simon, the ship carpenter—that drunken sot who can't speak two words. You are a disgusting

bad boy. First you sign, then you run away! Get up!

BAR. Me—you may beat me to death!—but I won't go on an unseaworthy ship!

KNEIR. What do you know about it? Hasn't the ship been lying in the dry docks?

BAR. There was no caulking her any more—Simon—

KNEIR. Shut your mouth with your Simon! March, take your package of chewing tobacco.

BAR. [Yelling.] I'm not going—I'm not going. You don't know—you didn't see it! The last voyage she had a foot of water in her hold!

KNEIR. The last voyage? A ship that has just returned from her fourth voyage to the herring catch and that has brought fourteen loads! Has it suddenly become unseaworthy, because you, you miserable coward, are going along?

BAR. [With feverish anxiety.] I looked in the hold—the barrels were floating. You can see death that is hiding down there.

KNEIR. Bilge water, as in every ship! The barrels floating! Tell that to your grandmother, not to an old sailor's wife. Skipper Hengst is a child, eh! Isn't Hengst going and Mees and Gerrit and Jacob and Nellis—your own brother and Truus' little Peter? Do you claim to know more than old seamen? [Fiercely.] Get up! I'm not going to stand it to see you taken aboard by the police—

BAR. [Crying.] Oh, Mother dear, Mother dear, don't make me go!

KNEIR. Oh, God; how you have punished me in my children—my children are driving me to beggary. I've taken an advance—Bos has refused to give me any more cleaning to do—and—and— [Firmly.]

Well, then, let them come for you—you'd better be taken than run away. Oh, oh, that this should happen in my family—

BAR. [Running to the cooking shed.]

KNEIR. [Barring the way.] You'll not get out—

BAR. Let me pass, Mother. I don't know what I'm doing—I might hurt—

KNEIR. Now he is brave, against his sixty year old mother— Raise your hand if you dare!

BAR. [Falls on a chair shaking his head between his hands.] Oh, oh, oh— If they take me aboard, you'll never see me again—you'll never see Geert again—

KNEIR. The ship is in God's hands. It's tempting God to rave this way with fear— [Friendlier tone.] Come, a man of your age must not cry like a child—come! I wanted to surprise you with Father's earrings—come!

BAR. Mother dear—I don't dare—I don't dare—I shall drown—hide me—hide me—

KNEIR. Have you gone insane, boy! If I believed a word of your talk, would I let Geert go? [Puts a package in his pocket.] There's a package of tobacco, and one of cigars. Now sit still, and I'll put in your earrings—look—[Talking as to a child.]—real silver—ships on them with sails—sit still, now—there's one—there's two—walk to the looking glass—

BAR. [Crying.] No—no!—

KNEIR. Come now, you're making me weak for nothing—please, dear boy—I do love you and your brother—you're all I have on earth. Come now! Every night I will pray to the good God to bring you home safely. You must get used to it, then you

will become a brave seaman—and—and— [Cries.] Come now, Barend, Barend! [Holds the mirror before him.] Look at your earrings—what?—

1ST POLICEMAN. [Coming in through door at left, good-natured manner.] Skipper Hengst has requested the Police— If you please, my little man, we have no time to lose.

BAR. [Screaming.] I won't go! I won't go! The ship—is rotten—

2ND POLICEMAN. [Smiling good naturedly.] Then you should not have mustered in. Must we use force? Come now, little man. [Taps him kindly on the shoulder.]

BAR. Don't touch me! Don't touch me! [Clings desperately to the bedstead and door jamb.]

2ND POLICEMAN. Must we put on the handcuffs, boy?

BAR. [Moaning.] Help me, Mother! You'll never see me again! I shall drown in the dirty, stinking sea!

1ST POLICEMAN. [Crossly.] Come, come! Let go of the door jamb! [Seizes his wrists.]

BAR. [Clinging harder.] No! [Shrieking.] Cut off my hands! Oh God, Oh God, Oh God! [Crawls up against the wall, beside himself with terror.]

KNEIR. [Almost crying.] The boy is afraid—

1ST POLICEMAN. Then you tell him to let go!

KNEIR. [Sobbing as she seizes BARENDS hands.] Come now, boy—come now—God will not forsake you—

BAR. [Moaning as he loosens his hold, sobs despairingly.] You'll never see me again, never again—

1ST POLICEMAN. Forward, march!

[They exeunt, dragging BARENDS.]

KNEIR. Oh, oh—

TRUUS. [With anxious curiosity, at side door.]  
What was the matter, Kneir?

KNEIR. [Sobbing.] Barend had to be taken by  
the police. Oh, and now I'm ashamed to go walk  
through the village, to tell them good bye—the dis-  
grace—the disgrace—

CURTAIN.

### ACT III.

[Scene: Same as before. Evening. A lighted lamp—the illuminated chimney gives a red glow. A rushing wind howls about the house. Jo and KNEIRTJE discovered. KNEIRTJE lying on bed, dressed, Jo reading to her from prayerbook.]

Jo. And this verse is mighty fine. Are you listening? [Reads.]

“Mother Mary! in piteousness,  
To your poor children of the sea,  
Reach down your arms in their distress;  
With God their intercessor be.  
Unto the Heart Divine your prayer  
Will make an end to all their care.”

[Staring into the bed.] Are you asleep? Aunt! Are you asleep? [A knock—she tiptoes to cook-shed door, puts her finger to her lips in warning to CLEMENTINE and KAPS, who enter.] Softly, Miss.

CLEMENTINE. [To KAPS.] Shut the door. What a tempest! My eyes are full of sand. [To Jo.] Is Kneir in bed?

Jo. She's lying down awhile in her clothes. She's not herself yet, feverish and coughing.

CLEMENTINE. I've brought her a plate of soup, and a half dozen eggs. Now then, Kaps! Kaps!

KAPS. Yes?

CLEMENTINE. On the table. What a bore! Deaf as a post! What were you reading?

Jo. The “Illustrated Catholic.”

CLEMENTINE. Where did you put the eggs?

KAPS. I understand.

KNEIRTJE. [From the bedstead.] Is anyone there?

CLEMENTINE. It's me, Clementine.

KNEIRTJE. [Rising.] Hasn't the wind gone down yet?

CLEMENTINE. I've brought you some veal soup, Kneir. It's delicious. Well, Almighty! You've spilled it all over.

KAPS. I'd like to see you carry a full pan with the sand blowing in your eyes.

CLEMENTINE. Well, its mighty queer. There was twice as much meat in it.

KAPS. What? Can't hear, with the wind.

KNEIRTJE. Thank you kindly, Miss.

CLEMENTINE. [Counting the eggs.] One, two, three, four! The others?

KAPS. There's five—and—[Looking at his hand, which drips with egg yolk.]—and—

CLEMENTINE. Broken, of course!

KAPS. [Bringing out his handkerchief and purse covered with egg.] I put them away so carefully. What destruction! What a muss!

Jo. [Laughing.] Make an omelet of it.

KAPS. That's because you pushed against me. Just look at my keys.

CLEMENTINE. [Laughing.] He calls that putting them away carefully. You'd better go home.

KAPS. [Peevishly.] No, that's not true.

CLEMENTINE. [Louder.] You may go! I can find the way back alone!

KAPS. My purse, my handkerchief, my cork screw. [Crossly.] Good night. [Off.]

CLEMENTINE. I don't know why Father keeps that bookkeeper, deaf, and cross. Does it taste good?

KNEIRTJE. Yes, Miss. You must thank your mother.

CLEMENTINE. Indeed I'll not. Pa and Ma are obstinate. They haven't forgotten the row with

your sons yet. Mouth shut, or I'll get a scolding. May Jo go to the beach with me to look at the sea? The waves have never been so high!

Jo. Yes, I'll go, Miss.

KNEIERTJE. No, don't leave me alone. Go on the beach in such a storm! [*Crash outside, she screams.*]

Jo. What was that?

CLEMENTINE. I heard something break. [Enter COBUS.]

COB. God bless me! That missed me by a hair.

Jo. Are you hurt?

COB. I got a tap aft that struck the spot. Lucky my head wasn't there! The tree beside the pig sty was broken in two like a pipe stem.

KNEIERTJE. Did it come down on the pig sty?

COB. I believe it did.

KNEIERTJE. I'm afraid it's fallen in. The wood is so rotten.

JO. Ach, no! Aunt always expects the worst. [Surprised.] Uncle Cobus, how do you come to be out, after eight o'clock, in this beastly weather?

COB. To fetch the doctor for Daan.

CLEMENTINE. Is old Daan sick?

COB. Tja. Old age. Took to his bed suddenly. Can't keep anything on his stomach. The beans and pork gravy he ate—

CLEMENTINE. Beans and pork gravy for a sick old man?

COB. Tja. The matron broils him a chicken or a beefsteak—Eh? She's even cross because she's got to beat an egg for his breakfast. This afternoon he was delirious, talking of setting out the nets, and paying out the buoy line. I sez to the matron "His time's come." "Look out or yours 'll come," sez she. I sez, "The doctor should be sent for." "Mind your own business," sez she, "am I the Matron or

are you?" Then I sez, "You're the matron." "Well then," sez she. Just now, she sez, "You'd better go for the doctor." As if it couldn't a been done this afternoon. I go to the doctor and the doctor's out of town. Now I've been to Simon to take me to town in his dog car.

JO. Is Simon coming here?

CLEMENTINE. If drunken Simon drives, you're likely to roll off the dyke.

COB. He isn't drunk tonight.

JO. Give him a chalk mark for that. Must the doctor ride in the dog car? Hahaha!

COB. Why not if he feels like it? Shall I tell you something? Hey, what a storm! Listen! Listen! The tiles will soon be coming down.

JO. Go on, now, tell us the rest.

COB. What I want to say is, that it's a blessing for Daantje he's out of his head, 'fraid as he's always been of death. Afraid!

JO. So is everyone else, Cobus.

COB. Every one? That's all in the way you look at it. If my time should come tomorrow, then, I think, we must all! The waters of the sea will not wash away that fact. God has given, God has taken away. Now, don't laugh, think! God takes us and we take the fish. On the fifth day He created the Sea, great whales and the moving creatures that abound therein, and said: "Be fruitful," and He blessed them. That was evening and that was morning, that was the fifth day. And on the sixth day He created man and said also: "Be fruitful," and blessed them. That was again evening and again morning, that was the sixth day. No, now, don't laugh. You must think. When I was on the herring catch, or on the salting voyage, there were times when I didn't dare use the cleaning knife. Because

when you shove a herring's head to the left with your thumb, and you lift out the gullet with the blade, the creature looks at you with such knowing eyes, and yet you clean two hundred in an hour. And when you cut throats out of fourteen hundred cod, that makes twenty-eight hundred eyes that look at you! Look! Just look. Ask me how many fish have I killed? I had few equals in boning and cutting livers. Tja, tja, and how afraid they all were! Afraid! They looked up at the clouds as if they were saying: "How about this now. He blessed us same as He blessed you?" I say: we take the fish and God takes us. We must all, the beasts must, and the men must, and because we all must, none of us should—now, that's just as if you'd pour a full barrel into an empty one. I'd be afraid to be left alone in the empty barrel, with every one else in the other barrel. No, being afraid is no good; being afraid is standing on your toes and looking over the edge.

KNEIRTJE. Is that a way to talk at night? You act as if you'd had a dram.

COB. A dram? No, not a drop! Is that Simon?

KNEIRTJE. [Listening between the bedsteads.] Am I right about the pig sty or not? Hear how the poor animal is going on out there. I'm sure the wall has fallen in.

JO. Let me go then. Don't you go outside!

KNEIRTJE. Ach, don't bother me! [Off.]

JO. You pour yourself out a bowl, Uncle Cobus! I'll give her a helping hand.

COB. Take care of the lamp chimney.

CLEMENTINE. [At the window.] Oh! Oh! Oh! What a gale! [Returning to the table.] Cobus, I'll thank God when the Good Hope is safely in.

COB. Tja. No ship is safe tonight. But the

Hope is an old ship, and old ships are the last to go down.

CLEMENTINE. That's what you say.

COB. No, that's what every old sailor says. Have a bowl, Miss?

CLEMENTINE. [After a silence, staring.] All the same, I shall pray God tonight.

COB. That's real good of you, Miss. But the Jacoba is out and the Mathilda is out and the Expectation is out. Why should you pray for one ship?

CLEMENTINE. The Good Hope is rotten—so—so—  
[Stops anxiously.]

COB. [Drinking coffee.] Who said that?

CLEMENTINE. That's what— Why—that's what— I thought— It just occurred to me.

COB. No, you are lying now.

CLEMENTINE. Oh, you are polite!

COB. If the Good Hope was rotten, then your father would—

CLEMENTINE. Oh, shut your fool mouth, you'll make Kneir anxious. Quick, Kneir, shut the door, for the lamp.

KNEIRTJE. [Entering with Jo.] Good thing we looked.

JO. The styte had blown down.

KNEIRTJE. Oh, my poor boys! How scared Barend will be, and just as they're homeward bound.

JO. Coffee, Mother? Aunt! Funny, isn't it, eh? I keep saying Mother. You take another cup, Miss. The evening is still so long and so gloomy—Yes?  
[Enter SIMON and MARIETJE, who is crying.]

SIMON. Good evening. Salamanders, what a wind! Stop your damn howling—

KNEIRTJE. What's the matter?

MARIETJE. When I think of Mees.

KNEIRTJE. Now, now, look at Jo. Her lover is

also—be a good seaman's wife. Foolish girl! Don't be childish. Give her a bowl to cheer her up.

MARIETJE. It's going into the sixth week.

COB. Don't cry before you're hurt! You girls haven't had any trouble yet! Is the carriage at the door?

SIMON. I'm damned if I like the trip. If it wasn't for Daan—

JO. Here, this will warm you up, Simon.

SIMON. [Drinking.] Curse it, that's hot. It's happened to me before with the dog car, in a tempest like this. It was for Katrien. She was expecting every minute. I was upset twice, car and all. And when the doctor came, Katrien was dead and the child was dead, but if you ask me, I'd rather sit in my dog car tonight than to be on the sea.

KNEIETJE. Yes! Yes!

JO. Another bowl!

SIMON. No, don't let us waste our time. Ready, Cobus?

COB. If you'll only be careful! Good night, all!  
[Both exit.]

JO. Jesus! Don't sit around so solemn! Let's talk, then we won't think of anything.

MARIETJE. Last night was stormy, too, and I had such a bad dream. It was so awful.

CLEMENTINE. Foolish girl! Dreams are not real.

MARIETJE. I can't rightly say it was a dream. There was a rap on the window, once. I lay still. Again a rap, then I got up. Nothing to be seen. Nothing. Soon as I lay down there came another rap, so. [Raps on the table with her knuckles.] And then I saw Mees, his face was pale, pale as—God! Oh, God! and there was nothing. Nothing but the wind.

KNEIRTJE. [In deadly fear.] Rapped three times?  
Three times?

MARIETJE. Each time—like that, so—— [Raps.]  
Jo. You stupid, you, to scare the old woman into  
a fit with your raps. [A rap. All startled. Enter  
SAART and TRUUS.]

SAART. How scared you all look! Good evening,  
Miss.

TRUUS. May we come in awhile?

Jo. Hey! Thank God you've come.

SAART. Nasty outside! My ears and neck full of  
sand, and it's cold. Just throw a couple of blocks on  
the fire.

TRUUS. I couldn't stand it at home either, chil-  
dren asleep, no one to talk to, and the howling of  
the wind. Two mooring posts were washed away.

KNEIR. [Darning a sock.] Two mooring posts!

SAART. Talk about something else.

Jo. Yes, I say so too. What's that to us——  
Milk and sugar? Yes, eh?

SAART. What a question! I take coffee without  
sugar!

Jo. Well, Geert never takes sugar.

CLEMENTINE. Your little son was a brave boy,  
Truus. I can see him now as he stood waving good-  
bye.

TRUUS. [Knitting.] Yes, that boy's a treasure,  
barely twelve. You should have seen him two and a  
half months ago. When the Anna came in without  
Ari. The child behaved like an angel, just like a  
grown man. He would sit up evenings to chat with  
me, the child knows more than I do. The lamb, hope  
he's not been awfully sea sick.

SAART. [Knitting.] Now, you may not believe  
it, but red spectacles keep you from being sea sick.

JO. [*Mending a flannel garment.*] Hahaha! Did you ever try it yourself? You're like the doctors, they let others swallow their doses.

SAART. Many's the night I've slept on board; when my husband was alive I went along on many a voyage.

JO. Should like to have seen you in oil skins.

CLEMENTINE. Were you ever married, Saart?

SAART. Hear, now, the young lady is flattering me. I'm not so bad looking as that, Miss. Yes, I was married. Spliced good and fast, too! He was a good man. An excellent man. Now and then, when things didn't go to suit him, without speaking ill of the dead, I may say, he couldn't keep his paws at home; then he'd smash things. I still have a coffee pot without a handle I keep as a remembrance.—I wouldn't part with it for a rix dollar.

CLEMENTINE. I won't even offer you a guilder! Hahaha!

JO. Say, you're such a funny story teller, tell us about the Harlemmer oil, Saart.

SAART. Yes, if it hadn't been for Harlemmer oil I might not have been a widow. I could marry again!

CLEMENTINE. How odd!

JO. You must hear her talk. Come, drink faster!

SAART. I'm full to the brim! What are you staring at Kneir? That's just the wind. Now, then, my man was a comical chap. Never was another like him. I'd bought him a knife in a leather sheath, paid a good price for it too, and when he'd come back in five weeks and I'd ask him: "Jacob, have you lost your knife?" he'd say, "I don't know about my knife—you never gave me a knife." He was that scatter-brained. But when he'd undress himself for the first time in five weeks, and pulled off his rubber

boots, bang, the knife would fall on the floor. He hadn't felt it in all that time.

CLEMENTINE. Didn't take off his rubber boots in five weeks?

SAART. Then I had to scrub 'im with soap and soda; he hadn't seen water, and covered with vermin.

CLEMENTINE. Hey! Ugh!

SAART. Wish I could get a cent a dozen for all the lice on board; they get them thrown in with their share of the cargo. Hahaha! Now then, his last voyage a sheet of water threw him against the bulwarks just as they pulled the mizzen staysail to larboard, and his leg was broke. Then they were in a fix— The skipper could poultice and cut a corn, but he couldn't mend a broken leg. Then they wanted to shove a plank under it, but Jacob wanted Harlemmer oil rubbed on his leg. Every day he had them rub it with Harlemmer oil, and again Harlemmer oil, and some more Harlemmer oil. Ach, the poor thing! When they came in his leg was a sight. You shouldn't have asked me to tell it.

Jo. Last time you laughed about it yourself.

SAART. Now, yes; you can't bring the dead back to life. And when you think of it, it's a dirty shame I can't marry again.

CLEMENTINE. Why not? Who prevents you?

SAART. Who! Those that pieced together the silly laws! A year later the Changeable went down with man and mouse. Then, bless me, you'd suppose, as your husband was dead, for he'd gone along with his leg and a half, you could marry another man. No, indeed. First you must advertise for him in the newspapers three times, and then if in three times he don't turn up, you may go and get a new license.

TRUUS. [Monotonously knitting.] I don't think I'll ever marry again.

SAART. That's not surprisin' when you've been married twice already; if you don't know the men by this time.

TRUUS. I wish I could talk about things the way you do. No, it's anxiety. With my first it was a horror; with my second you know yourselves.

CLEMENTINE. Go on, Truus. I could sit up all night hearing tales of the sea.

KNEIJTJE. Don't tell stories of suffering and death—

SAART. Hey! How fretful you are! Come, pour us some more coffee.

TRUUS. [Quietly knitting and speaking in a toneless voice.] Ach, it couldn't have happened here, Kneir. We lived in Vlardinghen then, and I'd been married a year without any children. No, Pietje was Ari's child—and he went away on the Magnet. Yes, it was the Magnet. On the herring catch. That's gone up now. And you understand what happened; else I wouldn't have got acquainted with Ari and be living next door to you now. The Magnet stayed on the sands or some other place. But I didn't know that then, and so didn't think of it.

Jo. Ssst! Keep still!

SAART. It's nothing. Only the wind.

TRUUS. Now in Vlardinghen they have a tower and on the tower a lookout.

MARIETJE. Same as at Maasslius.

TRUUS. And this lookout hoists a red ball when he sees a lugger or a trawler or other boat in the distance. And when he sees who it is, he lets down the ball, runs to the ship owner and the families to warn them; that's to say: the Albert Koster or the Good Hope is coming. Now mostly he's no need

to warn the family. For, as soon as the ball is hoisted in the tower, the children run in the streets shouting, I did it, too, as a child: "The ball is up! The ball is up!" Then the women run, and wait below for the lookout to come down, and when it's their ship they give him pennies.

CLEMENTINE. And then—

TRUUS. [Staring into the fire.] And—and—the Magnet with my first husband, didn't I say I'd been married a year? The Magnet stayed out seven weeks—with provisions for six—and each time the children shouted: "The ball is up, Truus! The ball is up, Truus!" Then I ran like mad to the tower. No one looked at me. They all knew why I ran, and when the lookout came down I could have torn the words out of his mouth. But I would say: "Have you tidings—tidings of the Magnet?" Then he'd say: "No, it's the Maria," or the Alert, or the Concordia, and then I'd drag myself away slowly, so slowly, crying and thinking of my husband. My husband! And each day, when the children shouted, I got a shock through my brain, and each day I stood by the tower, praying that God—but the Magnet did not come—did not come. At the last I didn't dare to go to the tower any more when the ball was hoisted. No longer dared to stand at the door waiting, if perhaps the lookout himself would bring the message. That lasted two months—two months—and then—well, then I believed it. [Toneless voice.] The fish are dearly paid for.

CLEMENTINE. [After a silence.] And Ari?—What happened to him?

TRUUS. Ari?

JO. Now, that's so short a time since.

TRUUS. [Calmly.] Ach, child, I'd love to talk about it to every one, all day long. When you've

been left with six children—a good man—never gave me a harsh word—never. In two hours he was gone. A blow from the capstan bar. He never spoke again. Had it happened six days later they would have brought him in. We would have buried him here. The sharks already swam about the ship. They smell when there's a corpse aboard.

KNEIERTJE. Yes, that's true, you never see them otherwise.

TRUUS. [Resigned.] You'll never marry a fisherman, Miss; but it's sad, sad; God, so sad! when they lash your dear one to a plank, wrapped in a piece of sail with a stone in it, three times around the big mast, and then, one, two, three, in God's name. The fish are dearly paid for. [Sobs softly.]

Jo. [Rising and embracing her.] Now, Truus!

SAART. Pour her out another bowl. [To MARIETJE.] Are you crying again? She keeps thinking of Mees?

MARIETJE. No, I wasn't thinking of Mees, I was thinking of my little brother, who was also drowned.

Jo. [Nervously.] You all seem to enjoy it.

CLEMENTINE. Wasn't that on the herring catch?

MARIETJE. [Going on with her knitting.] His second voyage, a blow from the fore sail, and he lay overboard. He was rope caster. The skipper reached him the herring shovel, but it was smooth and it slipped from his hands. Then Jerusalem, the mate, held out the broom to him—again he grabbed hold. The three of them pulled him up; then the broom gave way, he fell back into the waves, and for the third time the skipper threw him a line. God wanted my little brother, the line broke, and the end went down with him to the bottom of the sea.

CLEMENTINE. Frightful! frightful!—Grabbed it three times, and lost it three times.

MARIETJE. As if the child knew what was coming in the morning, he had lain crying all night. So the skipper told. Crying for Mother, who was sick. When the skipper tried to console him, he said: "No, skipper, even if Mother does get well, I eat my last herring today." That's what started Father to drinking.

CLEMENTINE. Now, Marietje.

MARIETJE. No, truly, Miss, when he came back from Pieterse's with the money, Toontje's share of the cargo as rope caster, eighteen guilders and thirty-five cents for five and a half weeks. Then he simply acted insane, he threw the money on the ground, then he cursed at—I won't repeat what—at everything. And I, how old was I then? Fourteen. I picked up the money, crying. We needed it. Mother's sickness and burial had cost a lot. Eighteen guilders is a heap of money, a big heap.

Jo. Eighteen guilders for your child, eighteen—  
[Listening in alarm to the blasts of the wind.]  
Hush! keep still!

SAART. Nothing, nothing at all! What makes you so afraid tonight?

Jo. Afraid? I afraid? No, say, Hahaha!—

KNEIRTJE. [Staring straight ahead.] Yes, yes, if the water could only speak.

CLEMENTINE. Come now, you tell a tale of the sea. You've had so much experience.

KNEIRTJE. A tale? Ach, Miss, life on the sea is no tale. Nothing between yourself and eternity but the thickness of a one-inch plank. It's hard on the men, and hard on the women. Yesterday I passed by the garden of the Burgomaster. They sat at table and ate cod from which the steam was rising, and the children sat with folded hands saying grace. Then, thought I, in my ignorance—if it was wrong,

may God forgive me—that it wasn't right of the Burgomaster—not right of him—and not right of the others. For the wind blew so hard out of the East, and those fish came out of the same water in which our dead—how shall I say it?—in which our dead—you understand me. [A pause.] It was foolish to think such nonsense. It is our living, and we must not rebel against our living.

TRUUS. Yes, I know how that is.

KNEIRTJE. [Quietly darning.] My husband was a fisherman. One out of a thousand. When the lead was dropped he could tell by the taste of the sand where they were. Often in the night he'd say we are on the 56th and on the 56th they'd be. And what experiences he had sailing! Once he drifted about two days and nights in a boat with two others. That was the time they were taking in the net and a fog came up so thick they couldn't see the buoys, let alone find the lugger. Two days and nights without food. Later when the boat went to pieces—you should have heard him tell it—how he and old Dirk swam to an overturned rowboat; he climbed on top. "I'll never forget that night," said he. Dirk was too old or tired to get a hold. Then my husband stuck his knife into the boat. Dirk tried to grasp it as he was sinking, and he clutched in such a way that three of his fingers hung down. Yes! yes! It all happened. Then at the risk of his own life, my husband pulled Dirk up onto the overturned boat. So the two of them drifted in the night, and Dirk—old Dirk—from loss of blood or from fear, went insane. He sat and glared at my husband with the eyes of a cat. He raved of the devil that was in him. Of Satan, and the blood, my husband said, ran all over the boat—the waves were kept

busy washing it away. Just at dawn Dirk slipped off, insane as he was. My man was picked up by a freighter that sailed by. But it was no use, three years later—that's twelve years ago now—the Clementine—named after you by your father—stranded on the Doggerbanks with him and my two oldest. Of what happened to them, I know nothing, nothing at all. Never a buoy, or a hatch, washed ashore. Nothing more, nothing. You can't realize it at first, but after so many years one can't recall their faces any more, and that's a blessing. For hard it would be if one remembered. Now, I've told my story. Every sailor's wife has something like this in her family, it's not new. Truus is right: "The fish are dearly paid for." Are you crying, Miss?

CLEMENTINE. [Bursting out.] God! If any ships should go down tonight.

KNEIRTJE. We are all in God's hands, and God is great and good.

Jo. [Springing up wildly.] Ships go down! Ships go down! The one howls. The other cries. I wish I'd sat alone tonight. [Beating her head with her fists.] You're all driving me mad, mad, mad!

CLEMENTINE. [Amazed.] Jo, what ails you?

Jo. [Passionately.] Her husband and her little brother—and my poor uncle—those horrible stories—instead of cheering us up! Ask me now for my story! [Shrieking.] My father was drowned, drowned, drowned, drowned! There are others—all—drowned, drowned!—and—you are all miserable wretches—you are! [Violently bangs the door shut as she runs out.]

TRUUS. [Anxiously.] I believe she's afraid.

MARIETJE. Shall I go after her?

KNEIRTJE. No, child, she will quiet down by herself. Nervous strain of the last two days. Are you going now, Miss?

CLEMENTINE. It has grown late, Kneir, and your niece—your niece was a little unmannerly. No, I'm not offended. Who is going to take me home?

SAART. If one goes, we all go. Together we won't blow away. Good night, Kneir.

MARIETJE. [Depressed.] Good night, Aunt Kneir.

KNEIRTJE. Thank you again, Miss, for the soup and eggs.

TRUUS. Are you coming to drink a bowl with me tomorrow night? Please say yes.

KNEIRTJE. Well, perhaps. Good night, Miss. Good night, Marietje. Good night, Saart. If you see Jo send her in at once. [All go out except KNEIRTJE. She clears away the cups. A fierce wind howls, shrieking about the house. She listens anxiously at the window, shoves her chair close to the chimney, stares into the fire. Her lips move in a muttered prayer while she fingers a rosary. Jo enters, drops into a chair by the window and nervously unpins her shawl.]

KNEIRTJE. You'd better go to bed. You are all unstrung. What an outburst! And that dear child that came out in the storm to bring me soup and eggs.

Jo. [Roughly.] Your sons are out in the storm for her and her father.

KNEIRTJE. And for us.

Jo. And for us. [A silence.] The sea is so wild.

KNEIRTJE. Have you been to look?

Jo. [Anxiously.] I couldn't stand against the wind. Half the guard rail is washed away, the

pier is under water. [A silence. KNEIRTJE prays.] Oh! Oh! I'm dead from those miserable stories!

KNEIRTJE. You're not yourself tonight. You never went on like this when Geert sailed with the Navy. Go to bed and pray. Prayer is the only consolation. A sailor's wife must not be weak. In a month or two it will storm again; each time again. And there are many fishermen on the sea besides our boys. [Her speech sinks into a soft murmur. Her old fingers handle the rosary.]

Jo. Barend, we almost drove him away! I taunted him to the last. [Seeing that KNEIRTJE prays, she walks to the window wringing her hands, pulls up the curtain uncertainly, stares through the window panes. Then she cautiously opens a window shutter. The wind blows the curtain on high, the lamp dances, the light puffs out. She swiftly closes the window.]

KNEIRTJE. [Angry from fear.] Have you gone crazy! Keep your paws off that window!

Jo. [Moaning.] Oh! oh! oh!—

KNEIRTJE. [Terrified.] Shut your mouth! Look for the matches! Not so slow! Quick! Beside the soap dish. [A silence.] Have you got them? [Jo lights the lamp, shivering with fear.] I'm completely chilled. [To Jo, who crouches sobbing by the chimney.] Why do you sit there?

Jo. I'm afraid.

KNEIRTJE. [Anxiously.] You must not be.

Jo. If anything happens—then—then—

KNEIRTJE. Be sensible. Undress yourself.

Jo. No, I shall stay here all night.

KNEIRTJE. Now, I ask you, how will it be when you're married? When you are a mother yourself?

Jo. [Passionately.] You don't know what you

say! You don't know what you say, Aunt Kneir!  
If Geert—[*Stops, panting.*] I didn't dare tell you.

KNEIRTJE. Is it between you and Geert? [Jo *sobs loudly.*] That was not good of you—not good—to have secrets. Your lover—your husband—is my son. [A silence, the wind shrieks.] Don't stare that way into the fire. Don't cry any more. I shall not speak any hard words. Even if it was wrong of you and of him. Come and sit opposite to me, then together we will—[*Lays her prayerbook on the table.*]

Jo. [*Despairingly.*] I don't want to pray.

KNEIRTJE. Don't want to pray?

Jo. [*Excitedly.*] If anything happens—

KNEIRTJE. [*Vehemently.*] Nothing will happen!

Jo. [*Wildly.*] If anything—anything—anything—then I'll never pray again, never again. Then there is no God. No Mother Mary—then there is nothing—nothing—

KNEIRTJE. [*Anxiously.*] Don't talk like that.

Jo. What good is a child without a husband!

KNEIRTJE. How dare you say that?

Jo. [*Beating her head on the table.*] The wind! It drives me mad, mad!

KNEIRTJE. [*Opens the prayerbook, touches Jo's arm. Jo looks up, sobbing passionately, sees the prayerbook, shakes her head fiercely. Again wailing, drops to the floor, which she beats with her hands. KNEIRTJE's trembling voice sounds.*] Oh Merciful God! I trust! With a firm faith, I trust. [The wind races with wild lashings about the house.]

CURTAIN.

## ACT IV.

[An old-fashioned office. Left, office door, separated from the main office by a wooden railing. Between this door and railing are two benches; an old cupboard. In the background; three windows with view of the sunlit sea. In front of the middle window a standing desk and high stool. Right, writing table with telephone—a safe, an inside door. On the walls, notices of wreckage, insurance, maps, etc. In the center a round iron stove.]

[KAPS, Bos and MATHILDE discovered.]

MATHILDE. Clemens!—

KAPS. [Reading, with pipe in his mouth.] “The following wreckage, viz.: 2,447 ribs, marked Kusta; ten sail sheets, marked ‘M. S. G.’

MATHILDE. Stop a moment, Kaps.

KAPS. “Four deck beams, two spars, five”—

MATHILDE. [Giving him a tap.] Finish your reading later.

KAPS. Yes, Mevrouw.

Bos. [Impatiently.] I have no time now.

MATHILDE. Then make time. I have written the circular for the tower bell. Say, ring up the Burgomaster.

Bos. [Ringing impatiently.] Quick! Connect me with the Burgomaster! Yes! This damn bother while I’m busy. Up to my ears in—[Sweetly.] Are you there? My little wife asks—

MATHILDE. If Mevrouw will come to the telephone about the circular.

Bos. [Irritably.] Yes! yes! Not so long drawn—[Sweetly.] If Mevrouw will come to the telephone a moment! Just so, Burgomaster,—the ladies

—hahaha! That's a good one. [*Curtly.*] Now? What do you want to say? Cut it short. [*To MATHILDE.*]

MATHILDE. Here, read this circular out loud. Then it can go to the printers.

Bos. [*Angrily.*] That whole sheet! Are you crazy? Do you think I haven't anything on my mind? That damned—

MATHILDE. Keep your temper! Kaps!—

Bos. Go to hell! [*Sweetly.*] Yes, Mevrouw. Tomorrow. My wife? No, she can't come to the telephone herself, she doesn't know how. [*Irritably.*] Where is the rag? Hurry up! [*Reaches out hand for paper.*] MATHILDE *hands it to him.* My wife has written the circular for the tower bell. Are you listening? [*Reads.*] "Date, postmark, MM." What did you say? You would rather have L. S.? Yes, yes, quite right. Do you hear? [*Reads.*] "You are no doubt acquainted with the new church."—She says, "No," the stupid! I am reading, Mevrouw, again. "You are no doubt acquainted with the new church. The church has, as you know, a high tower; that high tower points upward, and that is good, that is fortunate, and truly necessary for many children of our generation"—

MATHILDE. Read more distinctly.

Bos. [*To MATHILDE.*] Shut your mouth. Pardon, I was speaking to my bookkeeper. [*In telephone.*] Yes—yes—ha, ha, ha—[*Reads again from paper.*] "But that tower could do something else that also is good. Yes, and very useful. It can mark the time for us children of the times. That it does not do. It stands there since 1882 and has never answered to the question, 'What time is it?' That it should do. It was indeed built for it, there are four places visible for faces; for years in all

sorts of ways"—Did you say anything? No?—"for years the wish has been expressed by the surrounding inhabitants that they might have a clock—About three hundred guilders are needed. Who will help? The Committee, Mevrouw"—What did you say? Yes, you know the names, of course. Yes, very nicely worded! Yes—Yes—All the ladies of the Committee naturally sign for the same amount, a hundred guilders each? Yes—Yes—Very well—My wife will be at home, Mevrouw. [*Rings off angrily.*] Damned nonsense!—a hundred guilders gone to the devil! What is it to you if there's a clock on the damn thing or not?

MATHILDE. [*Turns away.*] I'll let you fry in your own fat.

Bos. She'll be here in her carriage in quarter of an hour.

MATHILDE. Bejour! bejour! If you drank less grog in the evenings you wouldn't have such a bad temper in the mornings. Just hand me five guilders.

Bos. No, no! You took five guilders out of my purse this morning while I was asleep. I can keep no—

MATHILDE. I take a rix dollar! What an infamous lie. Just one guilder! Bah, what a man, who counts his money before he goes to bed!

Bos. Bejour! bejour!

MATHILDE. Very well, don't give it—Then I can treat the Burgomaster's wife to a glass of gin presently—three jugs of old gin and not a single bottle of port or sherry! [*Bos angrily throws down two rix dollars.*] Say, am I your servant? If it wasn't for me you wouldn't be throwing rix dollars around!—Bah! [*Goes off angrily.*]

KAPS. [*Reading.*] Ijmuiden, 24 December—Today there were four sloops in the market with 500

to 800 live and 1,500 to 2,100 dead haddock and some—live cod—The live cod brought  $7\frac{1}{4}$ —the dead—

Bos. Haven't you anything else to do?

KAPS. The dead haddock brought thirteen and a half guilders a basket.

Bos. [Knocking on the desk.] I know all that! Here, take hold! Take your book—turn to the credit page of the Expectation—

KAPS. [Looking.] The Jacoba? no, the Queen Wilhelmina? no, the Mathilde? no—the Good hope? —We can whistle for her. The Expectation?

Bos. What was the gross total?

KAPS. Fourteen hundred and forty-three guilders and forty-seven cents.

Bos. I thought so. How could you be so ungodly stupid, to deduct four guilders, 88, for the widows and orphans' fund?

KAPS. Let's see. [Figuring.]—1,443—3 per cent off—that's 1,400—that's gross three hundred and 87 guilders—yes, it should be three guilders, 88, instead of four, 88.

Bos. [Rising.] If you're going into your dotage, Jackass! you can go. Your errors are always on the wrong side!

KAPS. [With a knowing laugh.] There might be something to say against that, Meneer—you didn't go after me when, when—

Bos. Now, that'll do, that'll do!—

KAPS. And that was an error with a couple of big ciphers after it. [Bos goes off impatiently at right.] Hehehe! It all depends on what side—

[Looks around, sees Bos is gone, pokes up the fire; fills his pipe from Bos's tobacco jar, carefully steals a couple of cigars from his box.]

SIMON. [Entering.] Is Bos here?

KAPS. Mynheer Bos, eh?—no.

SIMON. Is he out?

KAPS. Can't you give me the message?

SIMON. I ask you, is he out?

KAPS. Yes.

SIMON. No tidings?

KAPS. No. Has this running back and forth begun again? Meneer said that when he got news, he—

SIMON. It will be nine weeks tomorrow.

KAPS. The Jacoba came in after fifty-nine days' lost time.

SIMON. You are—You know more than you let on.

KAPS. Are you loaded already?

SIMON. Not a drop.

KAPS. Then it's time—I know more, eh? I'm holding off the ships by ropes, eh?

SIMON. I warned you folks when that ship lay in the docks. What were the words I spoke then, eh?

KAPS. [Shrugging his shoulders.] All tales on your part for a glass of gin!

SIMON. You lie. You was there, and the Miss was there. I says, "The ship is rotten, that caulking was damn useless. That a floating coffin like that"—

KAPS. Good! that's what you said. I don't deny it. What of it? Are you so clever that when you're half drunk—

SIMON. [Angry.] That's a damned lie!

KAPS. Not drunk then, are you such an authority, you a shipmaster's assistant, that when you say "no," and the owner and the Insurance Company say "yes," my employer must put his ship in the dry docks?

SIMON. Damned rot! I warned you! And now, I say—now, I say—that if Mees, my daughter's be-

trothed, not to speak of the others, if Mees—there will be murder.

KAPS. You make me laugh! Go get yourself a dram and talk sense.

[Enter MARIETJE.]

SIMON. Better have stayed outside. No tidings.

MARIETJE. [Softly sobbing.] No tidings.

SIMON. Murder will come of it. [Both off.]

BOS. [Enters.] Who's here?

KAPS. Simon and his daughter. Threats! Are you going out?

BOS. Threats! Is the fellow insane? I'll be back in ten minutes. Whoever comes must wait.

KAPS. He spoke of——

BOS. I don't care to hear! [Off.]

KAPS. [Goes back to his desk; the telephone rings. He solemnly listens at the receiver.] Can't understand you. I am the bookkeeper. Mynheer will be back in ten minutes. Ring up again.

[Enter SAAET.]

SAAET. Good day, my dear.

KAPS. You here again? What do you want?

SAAET. I want you—Jesus! What a cold wind! May I warm my hands a moment?

KAPS. Stay on that side of the railing.

SAAET. Sweet beast! You make me tired. Mynheer Bos just went round the corner. [Warms herself.] No use asking about the Hope. Jesus! Seven families. How lucky that outside of the children there were three unmarried men on board. Nothing washed ashore anywhere!

KAPS. No, no!

SAAET. Now, don't eat me up.

KAPS. I wish you'd stay behind the railing. What do you want?

SAAET. [Looking in his pocket.] Look out! Or

you'll break Meneer's cigars. Old thief! [He smiles.] Kaps, do you want to make a guilder?

KAPS. That depends.

SAART. I'm engaged to Bol, the skipper.

KAPS. I congratulate you!

SAAET. He's lying here, with a load of peat for the city. Now, how can I marry him?

KAPS. How can you?

SAAET. I can't; because they don't know if my husband's dead.

KAPS. The legal limit is—

SAART. I know that much myself.

KAPS. You must summons him, 'pro Deo,' three times in the papers and if he doesn't come then, and that he'll not do, for there aren't any more ghosts in the world, then you can—

SAART. Now, if you'd attend to this little matter, Bol and I would always be grateful to you.

KAPS. That is lawyer's business. You must go to the city for that.

SAART. Gracious, what botheration! When your common sense tells you I haven't seen Jacob in three years and the—

[COBUS enters, trembling with agitation.]

COB. There are tidings! There are tidings!

KAPS. Tidings? What are you telling us?

COB. [Almost crying.] There must be tidings of the boys—of—the Hope.

KAPS. Nothing! [Friendlier.] Now, there is no use in your coming to this office day after day. I haven't any good news to give you, the bad you already know. Sixty-two days—

COB. The water bailiff received a telegram. Ach, ach, ach; Meneer Kaps, help us out of this uncertainty. My sister—and my niece—are simply insane with grief. [Trembling violently.]

KAPS. On my word of honor. Are you running away again?

COB. My niece is sitting alone at home—my sister is at the Priest's, cleaning house. There must be something—there must be something.

KAPS. Who made you believe that?

COB. The water bailiff's clerk said—said—Ach, dear God—*[Off.]*

SAART. Perhaps he is right.

KAPS. Everything is possible.

SAART. Has Meneer Bos any hope?

KAPS. Hope? Nine weeks! that old ship! after that storm—all things are possible. No, I wouldn't give a cent for it. Provisions for six weeks. If they had run into an English harbor, we would have had tidings.

CLEMENTINE. *[Enters.]* Good day, Saart. Are there visitors inside, Kaps?

KAPS. *[Looking through window.]* The Burgo-master's carriage. Committee meeting for the clock. A new span. I wish I had their money.

CLEMENTINE. *[Laying her sketch book on KAPS's desk.]* I saw Cobus go by. Poor thing! How he has aged. I hardly recognized him. *[Opening the sketch book.]* Look. That's the way he was three months ago, hale and jolly. You may look, too, Kaps.

KAPS. No, Miss, I haven't the time.

SAART. Daantje's death was a blow to him—you always saw them together, always discussing. Now he hasn't a friend in the "Home"; that makes a big difference.

CLEMENTINE. Do you recognize these?

SAART. Well, that's Kneir, that's Barend with the basket on his back, and that's—*[The telephone bell rings.]* CLEMENTINE closes her book.

KAPS. Meneer is out. They rang once before.

CLEMENTINE. [Listening at telephone.] Yes!—Papa isn't here. How long will he be, Kaps?

KAPS. Two or three minutes.

CLEMENTINE. [Startled.] What did you say? A hatch marked 47—and—[Trembling.]—I don't understand you. [Screams and lets the receiver fall.]

KAPS. What's that? What's that?

CLEMENTINE. [Painfully shocked.] I don't dare listen—Oh, oh!

KAPS. Was that the water bailiff?

CLEMENTINE. [Passionately.] Barend washed ashore. Oh God, now it is ended!

SAAET. Barend!—Barend!—

CLEMENTINE. A telegram from Nieuwediep. A hatch—and a corpse—

[Enter Bos.]

Bos. What's going on here? Why are you crying?

KAPS. Tidings of the Good Hope.

Bos. Tidings?

KAPS. The water bailiff is on the 'phone.

Bos. The water bailiff!—Step aside—Go along, you! What are you gaping at?

SAART. I—I—[Goes timidly off.]

Bos. [Ringing.] Hello! Who is that? The water bailiff! A telegram from Nieuwediep? North of the Hook? I don't understand a word! Stop your howling! a hatch, you say? 47!—Well, that's damned—miserable—that! the corpse—advanced stage of decomposition! Barend—mustered in as oldest boy! Recognized by who? by—oh!—The Expectation has come into Nieuwediep disabled? And did Skipper Maatsuiker recognize him? Earrings? Yes, yes, silver earrings. No, never mind that. So it isn't necessary to send any one from here for the identification? Yes, damned sad—yes—yes—we are

in God's hand—Yes—yes—I no longer had any doubts—thank you—yes—I'd like to get the official report as soon as possible. I will inform the underwriters, bejour! [Hangs up the receiver.] I'm simply dead! twelve men!

KAPS. Barend? Kneirtje's son? Washed ashore? That's—that's a wonder. I never expected to hear of the ship again. With the Clementine.

Bos. [Angrily.] Yes — yes — yes — yes — [To CLEMENTINE.] Go inside to your mother! What stupidity to repeat what you heard in that woman's presence. It won't be five minutes now till half the village is here! Don't you understand me? You sit there, God save me, and take on as if your lover was aboard—

CLEMENTINE. Why didn't you listen? [Sobs softly.]

Bos. Listen!

CLEMENTINE. When Simon, the shipbuilder's assistant—

Bos. The fellow was drunk.

CLEMENTINE. [Firmly.] He was not!

Bos. He was, too! And if he hadn't been, what right have you to stick your nose into matters you don't understand?

CLEMENTINE. Dear God, now I am also guilty—

Bos. [Angrily.] Guilty? Guilty! Have the novels you read gone to your head? Guilty! Are you possessed, to use those words after such an accident?

CLEMENTINE. He said that the ship was a floating coffin. Then I heard you say that in any case it would be the last voyage for the Hope.

Bos. [Angrily at first.] That damned boarding school; those damned boarding school fads! Walk if you like through the village like a fool, sketch-

ing the first rascal or beggar you meet! But don't blab out things you can be held to account for. A floating coffin! Say, rather, a drunken authority—The North, of Pieterse, and the Surprise and the Willem III and the Young John. I can keep on naming them. Half of the fishing fleet and half the merchant fleet are floating coffins. Did you hear that, Kaps?

KAPS. [Timidly.] No, Meneer, I don't hear anything.

BOS. If you had asked me: "Father, how is this?" I would have explained it to you. But you conceited young people meddle with everything and more, too! What stronger proof is there than the yearly inspection of the ships by the underwriters? Do you suppose that when I presently ring up the underwriter and say to him, "Meneer, you can plank down fourteen hundred guilders"—that he does that on loose grounds? You ought to have a face as red as a buoy in shame for the way you flapped out your nonsense! Nonsense, I say! Nonsense; that might take away my good name, if I wasn't so well known.

CLEMENTINE. [Sadly.] If I were a ship owner—and I heard—

BOS. God preserve the fishery from an owner who makes drawings and cries over pretty vases! I stand as a father at the head of a hundred homes. Business is business. When you get sensitive you go head over heels. What, Kaps? [KAPS makes a motion that he cannot hear.] Now, go to your mother. The Burgomaster's wife is making a call.

KAPS. Here is the muster roll. [Reading.] Willem Hengst, aged thirty-seven, married, four children—

BOS. Wait a moment till my daughter—

CLEMENTINE. I won't speak another word.

KAPS. [Reading on.] Jacob Zwart, aged thirty-five years, married, three children. Gerrit Plas, aged twenty-five years, married, one child. Geert Vermeer, unmarried, aged twenty-six years. Nellis Boom, aged thirty-five years, married, seven children. Klaas Steen, aged twenty-four years, married. Solomon Bergen, aged twenty-five years, married, one child. Mari Stad, aged forty-five years, married. Mees, aged nineteen years. Jacob Boom, aged twenty years. Barend Vermeer, aged nineteen years. Pietje Stappers, aged twelve years.

Bos. [Cast down.] Seven homes.

CLEMENTINE. Sixteen children.

[Enter TRUUS and MARIETJE.]

TRUUS. [Panting.] Are there tidings? Tidings of my little son? [Wild despair.] Ach, God! Ach, God; don't make me unhappy, Meneer!—

Bos. I'm sorry, Mrs. Stappers—

MARIETJE. [Shrieking.] It can't be! It can't be! You lie!—It isn't possible!—

Bos. [Gently.] The Burgomaster at Nieuwediep has telegraphed the water bailiff. Barend Vermeer was washed ashore. You know what that means, and a hatch of the 47—

TRUUS. [Loudly.] Oh, Mother Mary, must I lose that child, too? that lamb of twelve years! [With a whimpering cry.] Oh, oh, oh, oh! Oh, oh, oh, oh!—Pietje—Pietje—

MARIETJE. [Bewildered.] Then—Then—[Bursts into a hysterical laugh.] Hahaha!—Hahaha!—

Bos. Give her a glass of water.

MARIETJE. [Striking the glass from CLEMENTINE's hand.] Go away! Go away! [Falling on her knees, her hands catching hold of the railing gate.] Let me die!—Let me die, please, dear God, dear God!

CLEMENTINE. [Sobbing.] Come Marietje, be calm; get up.

TRUUS. On his first voyage. And so brave; as he stood there, waving, when the ship—[Sobs loudly.]

Bos. It can't be helped, Truus. It is a visitation. There hasn't been a storm like that in years. Think of Hengst with four children, and Jacob and Gerrit—And, although it's no consolation, I will hand you your boy's wages today, if you like. Both of you go home now and resign yourselves to the inevitable—take her with you—she seems—

MARIETJE. [With trembling sobs.] I don't want to go home. I want to die, die—

CLEMENTINE. [Supporting her.] Cry, Marietje, cry, poor lamb—

[They go off.]

Bos. [Angrily walking back and forth.] What's the matter with you? Are you too lazy to put pen to paper today? You needn't answer! Have you the Widows' and Orphans' fund at hand? Well!

KAPS. [Shuffling to the safe.] The top drawer is still locked. [Bos throws him the keys.] Oh, thank you. [Opens the safe, shuffles back to Bos's desk with the book.] If you please, Meneer.

Bos. Ninety-five widows, fourteen old sailors and fishermen.

KAPS. Yes, the fund fell short some time ago. We will have to put in another appeal.

MATHILDE. [Entering.] Clemens, what a misfortune! The Burgomaster's wife asks if you will come in for a moment. She sits there crying.

Bos. No! Crying enough here. No time!

MATHILDE. Ach! Ach! Kaps, here is the copy for the circular. Hurry, do you hear!

Bos. Talk to her about making a public appeal for the unfortunates.

MATHILDE. Yes, but, Clemens, isn't that overdoing it, two begging parties?

BOS. I will do it myself, then—[Both exit.]

CLEMENTINE. [Enters. Softly weeping.] Kaps! Kaps! [Goes to his desk and sits down opposite to him.] I feel so miserable—

KAPS. Very unwise, Miss. Many ships go down. The Good Hope scarcely counts. I have it here. Where is it? where is it? The statement of Veritas for October—October alone; lost, 105 sailing vessels and 30 steamships—that's a low estimate; fifteen hundred dead in one month. [Pointing to the sea.] Yes, when you see it as it appears today, so smooth, with the floating gulls, you wouldn't believe that it murders so many people.

[Enter Jo and COBUS.]

CLEMENTINE. [To Jo and COBUS, who sit alone in a dazed way.] Come in, Jo. Jo! [Jo slowly shakes her head.]

COB. [Trembling.] We have just run from home—for Saart just as I said—just as I said—

[Enter Bos.]

BOS. [To Jo.] Here, sit down. [Shoves a chair by the stove.] You stay where you are, Cobus. You have no doubt heard?—

JO. [Sobbing.] About Barend? Yes, but Geert! It happens so often that they get off in row boats.

BOS. I can't give you that consolation. Not only was there a hatch, but the corpse was in an extreme state of dissolution.

JO. [Anxiously.] Yes! Yes! But if it shouldn't be Barend. Who says it was Barend?

BOS. Skipper Maatsuiker of the Expectation identified him, and the earrings.

JO. Maatsuiker? Maatsuiker? And if—he should

be mistaken—— I've come to ask you for money,  
Meneer, so I can go to the Helder myself.

Bos. Come, that's foolish!

Jo. [Crying.] Barend must be buried any way.

Bos. The Burgomaster of Nieuwediep will take  
care of that——

[Enter SIMON.]

SIMON. [Drunk.] I— I— heard—— [Makes a  
strong gesture towards Bos.]

Bos. [Nervous vehemence.] Get out, you drunken  
sot!

SIMON. [Stammering.] I— I— won't murder  
you. I— I— have no evil intentions——

Bos. [Trembling.] Send for a policeman, Kaps.  
Must that drunken fellow——

SIMON. [Steadying himself by holding to the  
gate.] No—stay where you are—I'm going—I— I—  
only wanted to say how nicely it came out—with—  
with—The Good Hope.

Bos. You get out, immediately!

SIMON. Don't come so close to me—never come so  
close to a man with a knife—— No-o-o-o—I have no  
bad intentions. I only wanted to say, that I warned  
you—when—she lay in the docks.

Bos. You lie, you rascal!

SIMON. Now just for the joke of it—you ask—ask  
—ask your bookkeeper and your daughter—who  
were there——

Bos. [Vehemently.] That's a lie. You're not  
worth an answer, you sot! I have nothing to do with  
you! My business is with your employer. Did you  
understand me, Kaps?

SIMON. My employer—doesn't do the caulking  
himself. [To KAPS, who has advanced to the gate.]  
Didn't I warn him?—wasn't you there?

KAPS. [Looking anxiously at Bos.] No, I wasn't there, and even if I was, I didn't hear anything.

Bos. [To CLEMENTINE.] And now, you! Did that drunken sot—

CLEMENTINE. [Almost crying with anxiety.] Papa!

Bos. [Threatening.] As my daughter do you permit— [Grimly.] Answer me!

CLEMENTINE. [Anxiously.] I don't remember—

SIMON. That's low—that's low—damned low! I said, the ship was rotten—rotten—

Bos. A drunken man's stories. You're trying to drag in my bookkeeper and daughter, and you hear—

COB. Yes, but—yes, but—now I remember also—

Bos. By thunder! you warned us too, eh?

COB. No, no, that would be lying. But your daughter—your daughter says now that she hadn't heard the ship was rotten. And on the second night of the storm, when she was alone with me at my sister Kneirtje's, she did say that—that—

CLEMENTINE. [Trembling.] Did I—say—

COB. Yes, that you did! That very evening. These are my own words to you: "Now you are fibbing, Miss; for if your father knew the Good Hope was rotten"—

JO. [Springing up wildly, speaking with piercing distinctness.] You, you lie! You began to cry. You were afraid ships would be lost. I was there, and Truus was there, and— Oh, you adders!

BOS. [Banging his desk with his fist.] Adders! Adders! You scum! Who gives you your feed, year in, year out? Haven't you decency enough to believe us instead of that drunken beggar who reels as he stands there?

Jo. [Raving with anger.] Believe you? You!  
She lies and you lie!

Bos. [Threatening.] Get out of my office!

Jo. You had Barend dragged on board by the police; Geert was too proud to be taken! Thief! thief! [Overwrought, hysterical laugh.] No, no, you needn't point to your door! We are going. If I staid here any longer I would spit in your face—spit in your face! [Makes threatening gesture.]

Cob. [Restraining her.] Come—come—

Bos. [After a silence.] For your Aunt's sake I will consider that you are overwrought; otherwise—otherwise— The Good Hope was seaworthy, was seaworthy! Have I no loss? Even if the ship was insured? And even had the fellow warned me—which is a lie, could I, a business man, take the word of a drunkard who can no longer get a job because he is unable to handle tools?

SIMON. [Stammering.] I—I told you and him and her—that a floating coffin like that. That stands fast!

Jo. [Bursting out.] Oh! oh! Geert and Barend and Mees and the others! Oh God, how could you allow it! [Sinks on the chair sobbing.] Give me the money to go to Nieuwediep myself, then I won't speak of it any more.

Bos. [Vindictively.] No! Not a red cent! A girl that talks to me as rudely as you did—

Jo. [Confused, crying.] I don't know what I said—and—and—I don't believe that you—that you—that you would be worse than the devil.

Bos. The water-bailiff says that it isn't necessary to send any one to Nieuwediep.

Jo. [Staggering to the door.] Not necessary! Not necessary! What will become of me now?—  
[COBUS and SIMON follow her out.]

[*Bos walks back and forth. KAPS creeps up on his stool.*]

Bos. [To CLEMENTINE.] And you—don't you ever dare to set foot again in my office.

CLEMENTINE. [With a terrified look.] No, never again. [A long pause.] Father, I ask myself [Bursts into sobs.] how I can ever again respect you! Ever again respect myself? [Exits.]

Bos. Crazy! She would be capable of ruining my good name—with her boarding-school whims. Who ever comes now you send away, understand! Trash! Rabble! That whole set are no good! That damned drunkard! That fellow that stinks of gin! [Sound of JELLE's fiddle outside.] That too! [At the window.] Go on! No, not a cent! [The music stops.] I am simply worn out. [Falls into his chair, takes up CLEMENTINE's sketch book; spitefully turns the leaves; throws it on the floor; stoops, jerks out a couple of leaves, tears them up. Sits in thought a moment, then rings the telephone.] Hello! with Dirksen—Dirksen, I say, the underwriter! [Waits, looking sombre.] Hello! Are you there, Dirksen? It's all up with the Good Hope. A hatch with my mark washed ashore and the body of a sailor. [Changing to quarrelsome tone.] What do you say? I should say not! No question of it! Sixty-two days! The probabilities are too small. [Calmer.] Good! I shall wait for you here at my office. But be quick about it! Yes, fourteen hundred guilders. Bejour. [Rings off; at the last words KNEIRTJE has entered.]

KNEIRTJE. [Absentely.] I— [She sinks on the bench, patiently weeping.]

Bos. [At the safe, without seeing her.] Have you mislaid the policies? You never put a damn thing in its place.

KAPS. [Pointing from his stool.] The policies are higher, behind the stocks.

Bos. [Snappishly.] All right, shut your mouth, now! [Turning around with the policies in his hand.] Why don't you knock?

KNEIRTJE. I wanted to—

Bos. [Peevishly.] You've come five minutes too late. That hussy that lives with you has been in here kicking up such a scandal that I came near telephoning for the police. [Crossly.] Come in. Close the gate after you.

KNEIRTJE. [Speaking with difficulty.] Is it true—is it true that— The priest said— [Bos nods with a sombre expression.] Oh, oh— [She stares helplessly, her arms hang limp.]

Bos. I have sympathy for you. I know you as a respectable woman—and your husband too. But your children! I'm sorry to have to say it to you now after such a blow, your children and that niece of yours have never been any good. [KNEIRTJE's head sinks down.] How many years haven't we had you around, until your son Geert threatened me with his fists, mocked my grey hairs, and all but threw me out of your house—and your other son— [Frightened.] Kneirtje! Kneirtje! [Rising.] Kaps! Water! [Bathing her forehead and wrists.] I'll be damned! I'll be damned!

KAPS. Shall I call Mevrouw or your daughter?

Bos. No! Stay here! she's coming to. [KNEIR. with long drawn out sobs, sits looking before her with a dazed stare.]

KAPS. Kneir—

Bos. Keep still! Let her have her cry.

KNEIRTJE. [In an agonized voice, broken with sobs.] He didn't want to go! He didn't want to

go! And with my own hands I loosened his fingers from the door post. [*Moans softly.*]

Bos. [*In a muffled voice.*] You have no cause to reproach yourself—

KNEIETJE. [*In the same voice as before.*] Before he went I hung his father's rings in his ears. Like—like a lamb to the slaughter—

Bos. Come—

KNEIETJE. [*Panting.*] And my oldest boy that I didn't bid good bye—“If you're too late”—these were his words—“I'll never look at you again.”—“Never look at you again!”

Bos. [*Strongly moved.*] Stop! in God's name, stop!—

KNEIETJE. Twelve years ago—when the Clemantine—I sat here as I am now. [*Sobs with her face between her trembling old hands.*]

Bos. Come now, be strong.

[MATHILDE enters.]

MATHILDE. Clemens! Ach, poor, dear Kneir, I am so sorry for you. It's dreadful! It is frightful! Two sons!

KNEIETJE. [*Staring.*] My husband and four sons—

MATHILDE. [*Consoling.*] But don't you worry. We have written an appeal, the Burgomaster's wife and I, and it's going to be in all the papers tomorrow. Here, Kaps— [Hands KAPS a sheet of paper which he places on desk—Bos motions to her to go.] Let her wait a while, Clemens. [*Sweetly.*] I have a couple of cold chops—that will brace her up—and—and—let's make up with her. You have no objections to her coming again to do the cleaning! We won't forget you, do you hear? Good day, Kneir. Be brave. [*Exits.*]

Bos. No, we will not forget you.

KNEIRTJE. Now, my only hope is—my niece's child.

Bos. [Surprised.] A child?

KNEIRTJE. That misfortune is added. She is with child by my son— [Softly smiling.] Misfortune? No, that isn't a misfortune now—

Bos. And you sit and tell that? This immorality under your own roof? Don't you know the rules of the fund, that no aid can be extended to anyone leading an immoral life, or whose conduct does not meet with our approval?

KNEIRTJE. [Submissive voice.] I leave it to the gentlemen themselves—to do for me—the gentlemen—

Bos. It will be a tussle with the Committee—the committee of the fund—your son had been in prison and sang revolutionary songs. And your niece who— However, I will do my best. I shall recommend you, but I can't promise anything. There are seven new families, awaiting aid, sixteen new orphans. [Rising and closing the safe.] No, sit awhile longer. My wife wants to give you something to take home with you. [Exits.]

MATHILDE. [Invisible.] Kaps! Kaps! [The bookkeeper rises, disappears for a moment, and returns with a dish and an enamelled pan.]

KAPS. [Kindly.] If you will return the dish when it's convenient, and if you'll come again Saturday, to do the cleaning. [She stares vacantly. He closes her nerveless hands about the dish and pan; shuffles back to his stool. A silence. KNEIRTJE sits motionless, in dazed agony; mumbles—moves her lips—rises with difficulty, stumbles out of the office.]

KAPS. [Taking up sheet of paper from desk.] Appeal, for the newspapers! [Smiling sardonically, he comes to the foreground; leaning on Bos's desk, he

*reads.]* “Benevolent Fellow Countrymen: Again we urge upon your generosity an appeal in behalf of a number of destitute widows and orphans. The lugger Good Hope—— [*As he continues reading.*]

CURTAIN.

## SHAKSPERE'S DRAMATIC-ROMANCES.

### I.

**M**ACBETH" was the latest of Shakspere's major tragedies; and only one of the plays he was to write thereafter, the ever delightful "Tempest," is really worthy of his reputation. His more important work was accomplisht, and his ambition seems to have slackened. It may be that he was wearying of his incessant labor and that he was looking forward to his retirement to the leisure of a country gentleman at Stratford. It may be that he was a little discouraged by the absence of any cordial appreciation of the best that he had done, and of any recognition that this best was in any way better than his average. It may be that he was acutely conscious of the changing taste of the play-going public, which was steadily losing its relish for idealism and which was displaying already the liking for the coarser fare that was to stain the stage in the Restoration. It was an undeniable disadvantage for any dramatist, and especially for so lofty a poet-playwright as Shakspere, that the Puritans had withdrawn altogether from the theater, thus subtracting from the audience the most serious and sober element of the English people. The drama is at its finest and noblest when its appeal is to the population as a whole and not to any caste or cotery. The influence of the courtiers on the one side was unhealthy, and equally unfortunate on the other side was the influence of the mere mob. For one reason or another, the playgoing body was deteriorating in the later years of Shakspere's life in London; and in the half dozen pieces he composed at the end of

his career we cannot fail to perceive the result of his keen desire always to give the spectators what they wanted, even if he also gave them at times more than they were ready to appreciate.

New men were coming forward as playwrights, men who belonged to the younger generation, and who could therefore reflect its likings without effort. In the twenty years of Shakspere's strenuous productivity the writers he had found in possession of the stage had disappeared. Gone were Marlowe and Lylly, Greene and Peele and Kyd; Ben Jonson had shouldered his way forward; Beaumont and Fletcher had begun the series of pieces which Fletcher was to continue with other collaborators after Beaumont had retired from active work. In the half dozen of Beaumont and Fletcher's plays produced by Shakspere's own company, the two young partners had elaborated a new type of play —the type which has been called the dramatic-romance. The germ of the dramatic-romance may be found in Shakspere's own romantic-comedies and also in his somber tragi-comedies, in which situations of a tragic possibility are given a happy ending. As Professor Bradley has asserted, the story of these Elizabethan plays "was intended to be strange and wonderful"; these plays were designed as "tales of romance dramatized, and they were meant in part to satisfy the same love of wonder to which the romance appealed."

But Beaumont and Fletcher went far beyond Shakspere in their search for the romantic. Their pieces take place in a realm of unreality, where the unexpected always happens, and where the expected rarely comes to pass. Characters are transformed in the twinkling of an eye; they change color while we are watching them; they do instantly the very

thing they have declared that they would never do. Consistency is constantly sacrificed to immediate effect. Striking situations are obtained only by ignoring the elementary facts of human nature; and these striking situations are heaped up lavishly and tumultuously until the spectator is left breathless from the effort to keep abreast of the playwright. Everything is sudden and startling; motives flame up and die down in the course of a single scene; there is no attempt at plausibility—still less is there any pretence of probability. Indeed, the authors seem to prefer the improbable as the more surprising and therefore as the more effective on the stage, where strangeness was attractive in itself. Situations and characters alike are intensified, exaggerated, carried to extremes, without regard to verisimilitude or propriety.

Professor Thorndike has acutely analyzed the dramaturgic method of Beaumont and Fletcher as displayed in their earlier dramatic-romance. "They sought to present a series of situations each of which should be interesting of itself and should contrast with its neighbors, and all of which should combine sufficiently to lead up to a startlingly theatrical climax. There is nothing epic about their construction; it is not truly dramatic like that of Shakspere's tragedies, where the action is in part developed from character." They tried to contrast as many varying emotions as possible. "They never strove to keep on one emotional key; they sought for an emotional medley." In other words, they were deliberately sacrificing the truly dramatic to the merely theoretic; and by so doing they succeeded in pleasing the more degenerate taste of Jacobean playgoers.

"*Philaster*" is perhaps the most typical of these

dramatic-romances; yet there is a certain uniformity of plot in most of them. "A story of pure, sentimental love is always given great prominence," so Professor Thorndike has pointed out; "and this is always contrasted with a story of gross sensual passion. The complications arising from this favorite contrast of love and lust give an opportunity for all kinds of incidents, involving jealousy, treachery, intrigue, adultery and murder. Each play has its idyllic scene, in which the pure and love-lorn maiden plays her part, and each play abounds in broils and attempted seductions and assassinations. While all this commotion is being aroused in the passions of individuals, thrones are tottering and revolutions brewing." And incidentally purely spectacular features are introduced now and again, especially dances, borrowed from the court-masques.

To this type of dramatic-romance, invented by Beaumont and Fletcher, belong the last three pieces which Shakspere composed without the assistance of any collaborator. Two of them, "Cymbeline" and "A Winter's Tale," fall completely within the definition of the type; and the third, "The Tempest," while it conforms less strictly, contains not a few of the essential elements of the dramatic-romance. We need not wonder that Shakspere was willing to take over a type of play developt by younger authors, who were his friends, who were writing for the company to which he belonged, and with one of whom he was soon to collaborate. He had never sought for originality of form; he had willingly accepted the framework of the chronicle-play from Marlowe and the formula of the tragedy-of-blood from Kyd. He had used the pattern of Llyl in one early comedy, and he had borrowed the method of Greene for another. He was singularly

susceptible to the prevailing influences of the play-house; and it was natural enough that he should avail himself of the new type the theatrical effectiveness of which must have been immediately evident to him as an actual actor in the plays of Beaumont and Fletcher.

It may seem at first a little surprizing that an elder playwright should thus be willing to avail himself of the labor of younger and less important poets. But there is no difficulty in showing that there are not a few precedents for this in the history of the drama. In the later tragedies of Aeschylus, for example, we can easily discover the willingness of the older poet to profit by the dramatic improvements due to the younger Sophocles; and it is not difficult to detect in certain of the final tragedies of Corneille, in his "*Suréna*" more especially, the influence of Racine, and a willingness on the part of the aging dramatist to adopt the devices which had captivated the spectators of the "*Iphigénie*" of his youthful rival.

## II.

Of the three dramatic-romances that Shakspere composed in imitation of Beaumont and Fletcher, "*Cymbeline*" is the one which most emphatically conforms to the type as this had been workt out by the younger playwrights. It has the merits and the demerits inherent in the formula. It contains a laboriously complicated story abounding in surprises and barren of reality. It is as artificial as the "*Philaster*" of Beaumont and Fletcher, which indeed seems to have served as its immediate pattern. It proves that Shakspere could be on occasion quite as ingeniously clever as the youthful collaborators whom he was emulating. It lacks the large-

ness of his great tragedies and the charm of his romantic-comedies. It contains no character—with the single exception of its lovely heroine, Imogen—who has won a place in the gallery of Shakspere's vital figures. Whatever its success when it was originally performed, it has been unable to keep itself on the stage, where it is seen now only at rare intervals, and only because some actress of authority wishes to adventure herself in the alluring part of Imogen.

Of course, the play is Shakspere's, after all is said; and there are many passages that only Shakspere could have written. When he composed this piece he was at his full maturity as a poet; and his wisdom also had ripened to enrich the dialog of this arbitrary tale. There is no falling off here on the part of the poet or of the philosopher, even if there is a sad decline in the psychologist and the playwright. It is astounding that after the ample creation of character which compels our admiration in the great tragedies he should have been satisfied with the summary, perfunctory outlining in the primary colors which we discover in the persons who carry on this dramatic-romance. Here he is vying with the inventors of the type, and he outdoes them in reckless disregard of plausibility and of probability. The characters have no independent life; they are the slaves of the situation. What they say and what they do is not what they would say or do of their own volition; it is only what they have to say and do to make the plot work and to bring about the surprize.

And the decline in dramaturgic dexterity is equally evident. The play is full of feeble devices and of clumsy makeshifts of a simplicity which Shakspere had long outgrown and which he had dis-

carded in his nobler plays, both tragic and comic. The exposition is pitifully ineffective when compared with the superb openings of "Romeo and Juliet" and "Hamlet," of "Othello" and "Macbeth." Shakspere sends on two gentleman that one of them may tell the audience what the other can hardly fail to know already. In like manner Belario has a long soliloquy, wholly without excuse, and delivered solely to inform the spectators who he is himself and who are the two young men who think themselves his sons. The last dying speech and confession of the Queen is absurdly out of nature; and it is reported to us only to clear the way for the quick sequence of marvellous discoveries and recognitions which tumble over each other in the final scene. The whole plot has been articulated to lead up to these discoveries and recognitions, which come one after another with impossible rapidity, each quick on the heels of its predecessor. But, despite all the care and trouble which has been spent on this arbitrary construction, the resulting scene is quite ineffective in the acting, for the plain reason that the discoveries and recognitions are astonishing only to the characters in the story, since they reveal nothing which the spectators do not know. There is no element of expectancy or of suspense in the protracted series of situations. The audience has long foreseen how the play would end—indeed, how it had to end—and there is too little interest in any of the characters, excepting always Imogen, too little reality in the tale itself, to make the spectators care how the persons in the play will take the strange news which is told to them by character after character.

In fact, most modern playgoers would be inclined to echo Matthew Arnold's remark after he had attended a performance of "Cymbeline." He ad-

mitted the charm of Imogen, of course; but he found the play itself "such an odd, broken-backt sort of thing; it could not have happened anywhere, you know." The very skill with which Shakspere adjusted his story to the contemporary (and therefore temporary) taste of the Jacobean audiences whom Beaumont and Fletcher had accustomed to a fantastic impossibility of this kind has recoiled on him and made the piece repugnant to us nowadays. Especially repulsive to us is the very center of the story, the monstrous wager which the husband makes with a casual stranger about his wife's chastity. Such an outrageous bet was all very well in the source where Shakspere found it; and it might have been possible enough in the Renascence Italy of Boccaccio. But its abhorrent grossness is inconceivable under the circumstances in which Shakspere presents it. There is an almost equal lack of truth in the interview between the would-be seducer and Imogen. Coming with a letter of introduction from her husband, Iachimo proceeds at once to take away the character of Posthumous and to make love to Imogen. The psychology of the seducer is so summary here that it may fairly be called childish.

Even Imogen herself, who has found favor in the eyes of many dissatisfied with the play itself, is less subtly and less ingeniously presented than her sister in the earlier romantic-comedies. Swinburne has called her "the woman best beloved in all the world of song"; and yet in what she actually does before our eyes she is far inferior in vibrating femininity to Juliet and to Viola, and to their bevy of beautiful sisters. She does and she says little more than what she is commanded to say and to do by the circumstances of the story of which she is the heroine. She is painted for us, and her character is delineated,

largely by what the other characters say about her, and only a little by what she says herself. Imogen is described rather than self-revealed, whereas Viola and Juliet are self-revealed rather than described. Viola and Juliet need no eulogy from the other characters and no commentary; they are what they are; and we know them by their own words and deeds. Here again Shakspere is obeying his pattern; he is surrendering his own sounder method of portraiture for the unsound method brought into fashion by Beaumont and Fletcher.

### III.

In its external trappings the "Winter's Tale" adheres closely to the formula of the dramatic-romance. It is even more "broken-backt" than "Cymbeline," since there is a gap of sixteen years between the third act and the fourth. It has the same lack of emotional unity, and it displays the same effort to accumulate disparate emotions and to mingle scenes of jealous rage with scenes of idyllic lovemaking. There is an even more obvious endeavor to relieve the action with extraneous spectacular effects—the bear which chases Antigonus off the stage, the grotesque dance of the twelve satyrs, the more graceful revels of the shepherds and shepherdesses, and finally the picturesque bringing to life of the statue of Hermione—all deliberately designed to gratify the craving for pictorial novelty which had become a markt characteristic of Jacobean audiences. And in the final scene there is again a series of discoveries and recognitions; but in the "Winter's Tale" they are more effective than in "Cymbeline," as well as less artificially brought about. At least one of them is still effective in the theater, the return

to life of Hermione; since Shakspere has carefully kept the audience in ignorance of her survival, there is a shock of surprise when the seeming statue starts to life and steps down from the pedestal. This clever effect gives to the final episode of the "Winter's Tale" a vitality which has now departed wholly from the final episode of "Cymbeline."

The story is quite as abnormal and as far-fecht, but it has nothing as unacceptable as the hideous wager of Posthumous. The hot jealousy of Leontes is as impossible as anything in the preceding play; and it is matcht in violence by the brutal attitude of Polixenes to his son. Yet on the whole the "Winter's Tale" is a far better piece of work than "Cymbeline." It has the full flavor of the dramatic-romance, yet its story is not so artificially involved. Its plot is simpler and clearer in the performance, and more appealing, in spite of the arbitrariness of the motiveless jealousy which is the mainspring of the machinery. It is freer in its composition and less obviously copied from the model set by Beaumont and Fletcher. One might even venture the suggestion that Shakspere has mastered the formula of the dramatic-romance and that he feels at liberty now to employ it in his own fashion. One evidence in support of this is the fact that certain of the characters exist apart from the situations, and have an independent life of their own, like the major characters in Shakspere's greater plays. It is true that Leontes and Polixenes are only what the plot permits them to be, and that even Hermione is not truly consistent. Her noble eloquence in the trial scene does not proceed from the mouth of the same woman whose witty banter has enlivened the opening episodes. Frankly unfeminine is the forgiveness of her husband without one word of reproach, altho

his atrocious conduct has caused the death of her only son, the supposed death also of her only daughter and her own seclusion for sixteen years.

But not a few of the other characters in the "Winter's Tale" have a vitality and a veracity lacking to the persons who carry on the plot of "Cymbeline." Paulina is alive and human and womanly, both in her devotion to her royal mistress and in her frank scolding of her royal master. She plays her part urged by her own individuality, and she is not the mere creature of the story, a puppet pulled to and fro by the playwright to compel the forward movement of the plot. And that friendly rascal, Autolycus, is a truly comic character, as rich in humor as Bottom or Dogberry (and probably written to be acted by the same performer). He is an unscrupulous creature, closely akin to certain of the intriguing knaves of Molière. He is a gay thief, with a light heart as well as a light hand. He is a wily rogue, with a sense of humor; and all the scenes in which he appears ring true. The second low comedy part, the old shepherd's son, is inferior only to Autolycus; altho in the folio he is called frankly the clown, he is not a mere jack-pudding, like the two Dromios and like other of Shakspere's earlier comic characters. He is not provided with the ready-made jibes and jests as good in the mouth of one low-comedian as in that of another. He is not merely a part, but a character.

Then, above all, there is unrestrained romance in the young lovers who captivate us in the last two acts. Florizel is the king's son who loves the shepherd's daughter and who holds the world well lost so that she is his. Perdita is the eternal maid, giving herself at once and wholly to the youth who woes her, knowing little about him, except that he loves her

and that she loves him, and caring less. The spectators are aware that she is of royal birth, and therefore a proper bride for her princely wooer; and therefore the audience follow the course of true love when it fails to run smooth, sure that it runs deep and certain that it will run into the haven of happiness. There is the perennial charm of a spring idyl in this meeting and mating of Florizel and Perdita. Shakspere may have introduced them in accord with his pattern, to follow the practice of Beaumont and Fletcher in mingling the gentler emotions with the more violent and volcanic. But whatever his motive, his imagination kindled when he came to compose these scenes, and he makes the young couple examples of young love triumphant over obstacles.

Florizel may be only what he has to be, an ardent lover, reckless of all but his love, but Perdita is more than the story requires. She is one of Shakspere's most enchanting heroines. She may be belauded by other characters in the play and her beauty may be praised by all who gaze upon it. But she is not dependent for her charm upon any eulogy from others, as Imogen is. She speaks for herself; she is what she is; we know her by her own words and deeds. She is a vision of joy steeped in poetry, a creature of the springtime of life, an ideal of ineffable maidenhood, "standing with reluctant feet, where the brook and river meet." Her vocabulary, her delicacy of speech, her delicacy of sentiment, may be out of keeping in a girl who has been brought up as a shepherd's daughter. But the spectators know her for a king's daughter; and the poetry that falls from her lovely lips is so exquisite that we are prompt to suppress all cavil. Less amply developt than Rosalind or Viola, Perdita is no less true to the eternal womanly. She shares their grace and

their charm; and the scenes in which she appears, even if more carelessly composed, are worthy of comparison with the scenes in which Rosalind and Viola take part. They are all three creatures of fancy; and the last of them proves that Shakspere's hand had lost nothing of its cunning in the years that had lapsed between. That she falls from grace once in the course of the play, and is ready to desert her supposed father in callous unconcern at the moment when his life is threatened—this is only what one must expect in a dramatic-romance. She is lucky that she is compelled only once to lapse from the standard of conduct which our sterner taste imposes even upon the most romantic heroine. Excepting at this single moment only she discloses herself as a younger cousin of Viola and Rosalind and as the elder sister of Miranda.

## IV.

The “*Tempest*” is believed to be the last play that Shakspere wrote; and it is certainly the latest of his three dramatic-romances. A dramatic-romance it is in its atmosphere and in the conduct of its plot; but here Shakspere utilizes the framework of that type to achieve a beauty all his own. Externally in the artificial structure of its story it may be only a dramatic-romance, but internally it is the most enchanting of fairy-tales. Where “*Cymbeline*” and a “*Winter’s Tale*” affront our common sense at every moment, the “*Tempest*” wins instant acceptance, since its fantastic misadventures are due to the actions of a magician, and of his attendant spirit, and are thereby furnish’d with a logical cause. Here we have added evidence of the truth of Aristotle’s assertion that probable impossibilities are more ac-

ceptable than improbable possibilities. The play is what the French call a *féerie*, a theatrical type of which the latest poetic example is the "Blue Bird." It has the simplicity, the naïvety, the child's point of view, with its easy welcome for the marvels of magic. Shakspere is again drawing upon folklore and in the "Tempest" he utilizes effects already approved in a "Midsummer Night's Dream." Ariel is own brother to Puck, the Ariel whom Prospero released from his long imprisonment in a pine tree. Ariel attires himself as a watery nymph to go invisible, and Prospero's weird powers can be exercised only when he dons his conjuring mantle. These outward and visible signs are helpful to the spectators, whose taste in sorcery was as primitive as when Marlowe had made Doctor Faustus perform his marvels and when Greene had displayed Friar Bacon as a conjurer of equally restricted imagination. The wonders workt by Prospero's art are obvious enough and therefore the better fitted to the understanding of the Jacobean audience.

Miranda is the true heroine of a fairy-tale and Ferdinand is the true prince who comes to woo her in the enchanted isle. The parts were plainly prepared for the performers who had undertaken Perdita and Florizel. But Shakspere is now far more interested in his work. His writing is spontaneous, even if his plotting is still a little labored. He creates characters with his old gusto and with all his old understanding of human nature. It is true that there is a usurping brother of the rightful ruler, a figure of little more validity than his predecessor in "As You Like It," and also that one moment Antonio proposes to murder Alonso and at another Caliban proposes to murder Prospero, because even a fairy-tale, if it is also a dramatic-romance, must

be stiffened by the danger of death, altho the spectators always know the play to be a comedy and therefore refuse to take these tragic perils seriously. Most of the characters have more veracity than those of a "Winter's Tale," as that in its turn in this respect excelled "Cymbeline"; they are more recognizable human beings; they are created with not a little of the freshness and energy of portraiture that ravishes our admiration in the great tragedies and the great comedies. The comic group especially, Stephano and Trinculo, are humorously realized, and they are not mere clowns with their mouths stuft with ready-made verbal witticisms. Above all is Caliban, the misbegotten son of a witch, one of Shakspere's most powerful creations, half-human and half-beast, an amazing projection of man's lower nature, at once amusing in his simplicity and appalling in his significance.

Altho it is always dangerous to discover the dramatist in any of his characters, there is a strong temptation to perceive in Prospero something of Shakspere himself, of his detached wisdom in his declining years, just as we thought we caught a hint of him earlier in the hot ardor of young Romeo and in the questioning philosophy of Hamlet in his manly maturity. And Shakspere has here given us an added proof of his belief that women are swift to fall in love at first sight and frank in making advances to the lover thus distinguisht. Miranda is as void of coquetry as Juliet or Rosalind or Viola, and as innocent in confessing her state of heart. She has scarcely seen Ferdinand before she accepts him as her destined mate:

"My affections  
Are most humble. I have no ambition  
To see a goodlier man."

She is compounded of purity and grace and charm; and it is no wonder that Ferdinand is taken captive by her instantly. She is the sleeping beauty of the fairy-tale, in an enchanted island rather than an enchanted castle, and he is the prince who comes to wake her to life with a kiss. We have never a doubt that they will live happy ever after, as all the loving young couples are wont to do in all other fairy-tales.

Shakspere composes his play in full accord with the requirements of the dramatic-romance, not only in the idyllic love-scenes and in the moving accidents of flood and field, but also in the abundance of purely spectacular elements taken over bodily from the court masques and yet here justified by the atmosphere of fairy land in which the whole story of the "Tempest" is adroitly involved. There is the magical banquet brought in by strange shapes dancing with salutations: and the dishes of this repast disappear with "a quaint device" whereupon the strange shapes dance again with mocks and mows. There is the very masque-like interlude of the three goddesses, Iris and descending Juno, and Ceres. There is the dance of the nymphs and reapers, to match the revels of the shepherds and shepherdesses in the preceding play but not here quite so logically related to the situation. There is the noise of hunters followed by the pack of dogs and hounds which chase the distracted and befuddled Trinculo and Stephano and Caliban. There is at the end the magic circle into which Prospero conjures his enemies and all the rest of the ship's crew, so that this play may also have its proper series of discoveries and recognitions.

The structure of the comedy as a whole is a little straggling, tho its movement is fairly straightforward and tho its several contrasting groups are kept

fairly well in hand. Its action is not in the least broken-backt like those of "Cymbeline" and a "Winter's Tale." The opening scene of the shipwreck is picturesque, and altho it is difficult of presentation on our modern picture-frame stage with its clutter of realistic accessories, it was easy enough to indicate sufficiently on the Jacobean platform-stage which made no pretence to the reproduction of reality. It is picturesque in itself and it strikes the keynote of the strange tale that is to follow. Immediately after it comes the scene in which Prospero expounds the situation to Miranda. Prospero's explanation is for the benefit of the audience, of course, and it is a simple enough form of exposition; but it is not out of nature, since Prospero had to tell Miranda sooner or later, and he had reason for postponing his narrative until it was necessary. And what Prospero tells Miranda arouses in the audience the interest of expectancy, since the spectators have seen the shipwreck and are ready for the arrival of the passengers and to see what will happen when the usurper lands on the isle of mystery.

One remarkable peculiarity of the "Tempest" remains to be discust. The supersubtle Italian critics of the Renascence had evolved, in part from their misreading of Aristotle and their misunderstanding of the Greek tragedians, but mainly from their own inner consciousness, what is known as the doctrine of the Three Unities,—of action, time and place. They asserted that every self-respecting play should have only a single action, that its action should begin and be completed in a single day and that this action should be confined to a single place. Logically they should have insisted upon a single spot, but they did not. To them a place was a palace, a town or an island, and the action so long

as it was restricted to this place might be in different parts of it. Ben Jonson, for example, was a tenacious stickler for the rules laid down by the Italian theorists and he boasted frequently that he had observed them strictly, yet in "Every Man in His Humor" his story takes us to different parts of London, and evidently in his mind London was a place having sufficient unity to keep him within the law. As the doctrine of unities was strenuously set forth by Sidney long before Shakspere began to write plays and as Shakspere was an intimate of Jonson himself, it is inconceivable that he should have been ignorant of the theory. Yet he always refused to accept it in his plays, perhaps because he saw no profit in imposing any fetters upon himself, perhaps because he knew that his audiences did not care whether he conformed or not, and perhaps because he saw the mighty advantage his freedom gave him in that the lengthening of the duration of the story allowed him to show character in process of change, of growth toward higher things or of disintegration toward lower.

Now, however, in the "Tempest," at the very end of his career as a playwright, as also in the "Comedy of Errors" at the very beginning, Shakspere keeps the three unities. He gives us a single action happening in a single day and confined to a single place. In the case of the "Comedy of Errors," this conformity to the rule may have been accidental, due to his use as a source of a Latin play on which the unities were already preserved. But in the case of the "Tempest" his obedience to the Italian code is plainly intentional. The scene, tho it shifts, never departs from the isle and the adjacent waters thereof; and the passage of time is dwelt upon several times so as to call our attention emphatically.

to the fact that the tale is told within less than twelve hours. This is the more surprising since Shakspere had never more boldly violated the so-called unity of time than in the immediately preceding play, in which the story stretches over sixteen years, being set forth in total disregard of the anticipatory animadversions of Sidney. The sole explanation possible is that Shakspere in this his last play amused himself by showing that there was really no great difficulty in obeying the behests of the Italian theorists, even if he did not hold himself bound to obedience, and that he could do it as easily as Ben Jonson, more easily even, since he did not allow his self-imposed restrictions to hamper his freedom. Whatever his motive, he plainly proved that it was possible to compose a comedy in which the pseudo-rules were followed and in which this servility to the theorists had not been allowed to spoil the play. He is here free from the reproach which a French critic once urged when he declared that he did not blame a certain dramatist for following rules but he did blame the rules for causing that dramatist to write a bad play.

BRANDER MATTHEWS.

## THE MODERN GERMAN DRAMA.



URING the current year, four well-known German dramatists, Gerhart Hauptmann, Arthur Schnitzler, Ludwig Fulda and Otto Ernst, have celebrated their fiftieth anniversaries. Hermann Sudermann and J. Ruederer (the Bavarian dramatist) are a year or two older, whilst Hermann Bahr, Richard Dehmel (better known as a lyric poet), Frank Wedekind, Ludwig Thoma, Eduard Stucken, Paul Ernst, Max Halbe and Adolf Paul are a little younger. All, however, belong to the same generation, and several of them came to the front during the eighties, that period of revolution in German literature which was founded on Ibsen, Zola, and, to a certain extent, Tolstoy. But besides these makers of German dramatic literature a younger generation and even a third one have been making themselves felt, especially H. von Hofmannsthal, W. von Scholz, Herbert Eulenberg, W. Schmidtbonn, Karl Vollmüller, E. Hardt, Moritz Heimann, F. Dülberg, Heinrich Lilienfein, Hans Franck, Hans Kyser, Carl Sternheim, Otto Hinnerk, Hermann Horn. The works of these men have received impress and guidance partly from Ibsen and the writers of the older generation I have just mentioned, and partly from Nietzsche and Strindberg, but perhaps most of all—in some cases at least—from that great figure in German literature, Friedrich Hebbel, whose works have within the last few years been recovered from the dusty archives of the history of literature and awakened once more to new life and influence.

Besides all these writers, there are of course many

quite good dramatists who cater for the yearly requirements of the stage in much the same way as painters of "pictures of the year" do for picture exhibitions. These dramatists often produce quite well-made work, which sometimes, through its theme, exercises a considerable influence on the public for a time. Of course they themselves are more guided by influences from without than by their own inward impulse, and they therefore serve to show which currents are the strongest in the intellectual life of the day. Thus the phenomenal success, in 1911-12, of the religious play, *Glaube und Heimat*, by Karl Schön-herr, is proof of a revival of religious feeling, which is all the more important for German culture inasmuch as, judging from other signs also, it seems to be more a religious regeneration of the individual than merely a church movement. The warm reception earned, during the last two years, by Charles Rann Kennedy's "Servant in the House" in many German towns, both as play and in book form, is another proof of this statement. Schön-herr is a writer with a good technique, who knows how to build up his scenes cleverly and give them dramatic point. But his horizon is limited and his figures have something small and thin about them. Although he professes to draw peasants, they resemble more the "drawing-room" peasants of a certain class of pictures, that is to say, peasants painted for the eyes of the town public, just as the whole work leaves the impression of having been *made* rather than of having *grown*. But the public could not resist the theme—the declaration of one's faith even at the cost of life and earthly home—so *Glaube und Heimat* was the greatest success of the year.

Quite a good piece also was Carl Rössler's "Five Frankfurters," a pleasant little comedy which repre-

sents the success of the year in this class of play. It calls for no further remark here, however, especially as it is soon to be given in America. But it is always a matter for rejoicing when a nice piece of work finds widespread favour, as that always speaks well for the improvement in the taste of the general public which, in every country more or less, finds delectation in musical comedy and farces of all kinds.

In spite of the opposition of the masses as well as of those "intellectuals" who are against progress of any kind, the modern German drama has been able to develop, although apparently—but only apparently—more in spasmodic outbursts than in an evenly-linked chain. Of the older as well as newer masters of it, some have not fulfilled the hopes set on them, but have preferred to become "darlings of the public." To that class belongs Hermann Sudermann. In such cases it is not quite easy to find the cause of this change of front. There is little doubt that love of the sweets of life which can be bought with a large income is an important factor, but the principal, and at the same time most tragic, ground for the change is generally an inner consciousness that the mental treasury is not so well supplied as to reach to great heights, to combat the world within and without and conquer it, to master internal and external problems. This knowledge once borne in upon one, whether consciously or only dimly felt (as in the case of the painter Millais), one then makes shift with the often quite respectable attainments in hand, and works up the first material that offers or seems to promise a particularly good return. Thus Sudermann's works have no inner life, nor have they any personality behind them, and only show in an increasing degree his many different mannerisms, although he still writes with care and con-

siderable technique. From being a herald in the battle he has become one of the crowd. His last play, *Der Bettler von Syracuse*, in blank verse, aims at being the work of a poet, and tries to show how a great man remains faithful to himself by sacrificing his personal fame for his Cause. But how can a heart dead at the core beat in rhythm? Thin, dry, yet bombastic language characterizes the style. The work itself is made up of big scenes—brilliantly arranged, it is true—in which hackneyed figures are dragged on to the stage again, while its sentiments leave a painful impression, because one can trace the cold, calculating hand behind them. And yet how much real feeling and rage against everything untrue and unreal are to be found in Sudermann's earliest works, in spite of their many faults: *Die Ehre*, with all its tirades, *Sodom's Ende*, and others, although they and their author were a good deal overvalued from the very beginning.

What a difference between him and Gerhart Hauptmann! When one looks at the furrowed brow and sorrowful yet longing eyes, one can read in them something of the inward struggle he has gone through. And although he, like Goethe, has been to the South to drink in joy and inward certainty at the Grecian source, *his* thirst is not likely to be quenched, for the inward struggle with himself will always be his lot. He is too much the child of his generation, not its master. In Hauptmann perhaps better than in any other modern artist can be found proof of the fact that, in the end an artist is an artist through his human qualities, through the greatness of his soul, the depth of his heart, the breadth of his inward and outward view, and not through the special talent which makes him a poet, a dramatist, a musician, or a painter, as the case may be. The

human gifts which have been given to him he is pledged to put out to usury. The outward stimulus received from sights, sounds and the experiences of life brings these gifts into play and develops them, and his "talent" gives them their outward form. The man who possesses only talent—that is to say, cleverness of representation in a certain line, as for example Ludwig Fulda—will be content to play with external trifles, while inwardly there is only emptiness. When such a man attempts, for once, to grasp at the high cedars growing on the mountains instead of the sweet berries easily plucked in the valleys, the result can only be disaster. This was what happened to Fulda during the past year with his *Seeräuber*. The theme is that of a man who has despised all the laws and morals of citizenship during his active life, but creeps back to them and the church for protection when he feels his activity on the wane, still wanting, however, to be considered "the devil's disciple" when the occasion arises. But Fulda has spoiled this fine theme by his treatment, and reduced it to a mere farce.

The two principal qualities which are the sources of Hauptmann's art and its form are sympathy and longing. Because of these qualities, he is one of the most typical representatives of his day, not only for Germany, but for the whole of Europe, but not one of its masters. These two qualities are of a negative nature, for even the wrath that arises out of pity can only give itself expression in destruction—as in *Die Weber*, for instance. There is no building-up power in them. Herein lies the great difference between European and American feeling: where the European is filled with longings and with the consciousness that they will never be fulfilled, the American is carried away with the enthusiasm which leads

to deeds. But I hope to be able to show, nevertheless, that a current moving towards something positive is making itself felt in Germany, and finding its expression in that "mirror of the times," the Drama.

It is no wonder, then, that the writers of this older generation took, as their starting points, Ibsen with his dramas scourging social evils, Zola with his materialism and his explanation of human phenomena by natural science, and Tolstoy with his passivity. And instead of religion, a standard was raised which bore the name of Karl Marx and his materialistic doctrines. What was done in point of real poetry under the ægis of these leaders was done more in spite of rather than with their help. It was not, it is true, the dry fleshless prose of the pioneers of the eighteenth century; the "Sturm und Drang" were too strong in them for that. But how could pure poetry grow and flourish on foundations of such earthly materialism, or inward rhythm be born of them? Nevertheless, this epoch of the eighties formed a spring-board, as it were, from which different movements were helped to rise towards a poetic and artistic beautifying and deepening of life. Hauptmann was almost the first to voice this longing when his *Versunkene Glocke* sounded up from the depths of the waters to the ears of man, like a sweet song of long-past childhood. With it the death-knell of Naturalism was tolled in Germany. A change had come over the cultural conditions, from which, after all, spring the fruits of literature and art, while they, in their turn, propagate culture by returning again to earth, that is to say, penetrating to the people. On religious, political and social questions mere negation and criticism were followed by active reconstruction. On the religious side it took two directions: one towards the deepening of the mystical

feeling of unity with the Deity both inside and outside the Church; on the other, an enthusiastic creed of the earth, the creed of the "superman" preached by that deeply religious heretic, Nietzsche. However different these two tendencies may be, they have one thing in common, and it can best be described in the words of Goethe: *Noch ist es Tag, da röhre sich der Mann!* ("It is still day; let man work!") As Nietzsche expresses it, both say "yes" to Life, both require and preach activity, the putting out to usury of the talents bestowed. Politically and socially much positive work was achieved by a kind of combination of democratic ideals with the cautious conservatism of Prussia. The past and its achievements were used as starting point and the peculiar qualities of the race taken into consideration, but there was no boasted attempt at creating a general Millenium on earth. On this new foundation of the internal and external life of the single individual, as well as of the community—for which the period of iconoclasm and criticism was absolutely necessary—have been built up a new art, a new literature, and an attempt, in the meantime at least, at a new drama. This new movement in the drama and other arts is founded on hatred, sharpened by Naturalism, of everything unreal, and is concerned primarily in attaining internal and external truth. But beauty, which had almost seemed to be discarded, is once more its object also; not, of course, merely a conventional beauty, but one which reveals and characterizes the rhythm of the subject treated, a beauty which enriches the spectator instead of merely satisfying his outward eye. In this beauty he will find again the law of the whole Universe, the cosmos and himself, just as he finds it in every blossom, every leaf, every blade of grass (compare W. Whitman, who has now many admirers

in Germany, and the Belgian poet, Emile Verhaeren). More than that, this new art is, to quote Nietzsche again, "more Apollinic than Dionysiac."

It is no wonder, then—to return to the domain of the drama again—that, speaking generally, a great many of the present-day works are written in verse and make use of historical or legendary material for their themes. Thus the resuscitation of the works of Hebbel at that time was a logical necessity. To the materialistic pioneers of the eighties he had meant nothing; in fact, his severe mental discipline must have been intolerable to them. They could not assimilate his views on life, for these views are grounded on a characteristic combination of the philosophies of Kant and Hegel, which enabled him to hold proudly to the theory of the freedom and responsibility of the human will as one of the factors of the iron laws of nature governing the spiritual as well as the material world. These principles are voiced in his dramas in the conflict between the tragic adjustment of the law of nature and freedom of will, the former, as the greater and universal law, always being victorious in the end. At that time, people talked only of the "blind powers of nature," and, making that their excuse, let themselves go with the rush of the current. They called it "living their life." That phase is over now, and rights, duties and limits are recognized.

As was to be expected from his whole nature, Gerhart Hauptmann has never been able to embrace the new art, at least not yet. He produced this year a play called *Gabriel Schillings Flucht* at Lauchstedt, a summer resort near Halle, in a little theatre which had once been used by Goethe. It was written several years ago, but a feeling of shyness had prompted him to shut it away in his writing desk. It treats,

as the play itself says, the "renascimento of the fourth decade" in a man's life, when his first youth with its ideals and hopes is gone, and the time has come to prove whether there is enough stamina to fight life successfully. Evidently some of his own secret experiences and dark hours of trial have been woven into the work. He has freed himself of much of his suffering in creating the character of the painter Schilling, who makes shipwreck for the sake of a woman, but atones for his spoiled life by a purifying death, as if recognizing that a tree which bears no fruit must be cut down to make way for a better. But all that is strong in himself Hauptmann has put into the sculptor Mäurer, who, like himself, longs to get away from "the mists of the north," as Goethe calls it, to the southern sun, Greece, there to drink in new life for himself and his art. From these two figures, born of his own innermost feeling, he has built up a quiet yet moving drama which makes the hearts of his hearers beat in sympathy. The play is not a fulfillment; rather is it a cry for deliverance, and at the same time almost a sign-post pointing the way thither. All the figures show again that, in characterization, Hauptmann is a master who understands how, from little traits scarcely noticeable to others, to draw human beings as they live and move and have developed. The call of the sea sounds through this piece, like the call of eternal nature before whom all that is weak and incapable must go under, for she wishes to be mother only to the strong.

Before this work appeared, another piece by Hauptmann—called *Ratten*, a play of the Berlin lower classes—was produced. He describes it as a "tragi-comedy," because in it he places tragedy and comedy side by side: the tragedy that of a woman in

whom the maternal instinct, even for a foster-child, takes the most elementary form; the comedy, the life of a theatre director whom nothing can destroy, although at one time he sinks down to being a fancy costume lender, while the next wave of luck throws him up to the surface again. The almost overwhelming tragedy of the simple woman and her husband is certainly enhanced by contrast with the comedy scenes, but it is gained at the cost of the unity of the piece. For the comedy and tragedy in it are not sufficiently connected with each other, and in any case not necessarily so. Thus the symbolic meaning of the title can only be discovered after some searching. It means that the Rats of Fate make no impression on the light, irrepressible souls of this world—their gnawing only affects the outside crust. But the still, deep natures feel the cruel teeth at their very hearts' core, and so bleed to death. As might be expected of a great man like Hauptmann, with these two works he gave to his people something of his inmost and best to commemorate his fiftieth year, and has earned for it their grateful thanks. His works and his habit of setting at naught—to a certain extent at least—all the rules of the theatre in the form of his plays, are open to criticism, but when it is a case of a work in which lives, contents and form are interwoven, the one grows out of the other, is itself the unalterable outcome of a personality and its style, and therefore cannot be changed according to pleasure or even to better knowledge without hurting the quality of the work, much as schoolmasters would have it otherwise. In spite of all that people have against Hauptmann in that respect, he has proved himself to be by far the most richly endowed with human qualities of all the dramatic poets of

Germany, this very gift making him, of course, the most human and therefore the most hampered by weaknesses.

*here* Quite a different front is shown to us by Arthur Schnitzler, the other famous dramatist who has this year entered the fifties. He once wrote a play, *Paracelsus*, on the doctor and "medicine man" of the Middle Ages, a man who understood the comedy of life and humanity. He himself resembles Paracelsus, except that, in addition to the smiling skepticism and irony and the touch of cynicism which has now taken the place of the slight sentimentality of his earlier years, he possesses a good strain of fine poetical feeling, which winds round these negative qualities like a beautiful wreath of blossoms, and lifts his work out of the category of the merely interesting and fascinating—as negative things often are—into the circle of treasures to be cherished.

While Hauptmann's development went hand in hand with his times—at least to a certain point, as we have just seen—Schnitzler's was a purely personal one. To observe and dissect the souls of men and especially woman—*Das Weite Land*, as he calls his last piece of analysis of body and soul (produced 1911)—had always had a great fascination for this dramatist. His views on the species "homo sapiens" have not undergone much alteration with the years, but his personal attitude has changed. Once he could feel for a poor little girl—that is all past now. "All the men and women merely players" is his creed in a nutshell. Masks fall when he looks; life becomes play, play becomes life. He seems to find satisfaction in his position as onlooker who recognizes all the motives of the actors in the game, a satisfaction which he needs as stimulus. One can reap much knowledge of the world from his works, knowledge

of others as well as of oneself, but the deepest voices do not speak here. That is because Schnitzler's characters are always seen and drawn as isolated beings, because he does not see the inner connection, binding not only man to man but man to God and the whole Universe, thus making out of single beings members of a whole. That is not to be attained by scepticism and cynicism. The God who, as Tolstoy says, is in every human being, will not let himself be mocked. But Schnitzler has never seen him, never experienced him, never reverenced him. If he had, his knowledge that no man can get away from the nature given to him—which is also the theme of his last play, *Das Weite Land*—would have awakened in him the great horror of a Sophocles (as in “*Oedipus*”) instead of his usual light irony. Mere playthings would then have turned into real tragedy. As it is, however, Schnitzler is not a dramatist who sows fruit-bearing seed. Rather is he the offspring of an over-refined culture limited to a certain circle. But the personal note, which is a feature of all his works, and the fact that all have come straight from his innermost being, guarantee them a lasting interest.

The knowledge that the eternal law of nature lets none go unpunished who venture to flout it becomes tragedy in the hands of Paul Ernst, a somewhat younger dramatist than Schnitzler, who, significantly enough, has been comparatively late in winning recognition. For he is the most important of the few of the older generation who have long striven for new principles and inward certainty, and have sought to leave chaos behind them and enter into cosmos. More strongly than in any one else can Hebbel's influence be traced in him and others of his school, for in this connection one can truly speak of

a modern school; that is to say, a movement held together by one fundamental principle. The deep understanding of the inner relationship of things seems to be part of them; they touch unerringly the kernel of tragedy, the antithesis: the clash of two great opposing powers; an echo of these great powers and of the law of the Universe seems to ring through them; their blood pulses in rhythm to the spheres, and through their verses as through Hebbel's, something like the voice of Fate itself sounds. And yet it is almost tragic to see how, in spite of all this, they lack one thing and almost the most important: the ability to form these ideals into creatures of flesh and blood and endow them with the speech characteristic of them. Their figures seem to be made of glass, through which the artistic mechanism can easily be seen, and to be merely the mouthpieces of the poet himself. Even Hebbel was not always successful in putting his ideas into human shape; with Paul Ernst it is still less so. While an artist like Shakspere, apparently quite unconsciously, shows the whole world in the single case he pictures, these philosopher-poets—for such they are in reality—seek out a concrete example, generally from history or mythology, to illustrate and still more prove the truth of the idea floating before their mental sight. Thus they do not start primarily from the human side. That is the reason of the characters being deprived, to a great extent, of their individual features and becoming pure types, as, a father, a king, a priest, a son, and so on. In this way the view presented is one-sided, because the other side of the medallion is hidden. Moreover, these writers forget the old experience that man is the most interesting thing to men, and that they want to share, in imagination, in a human fate, not in the fate of abstract

figures. When the fate of a real human being is formed by the all-understanding, all-sympathizing master hand of a great artist, the fate of all humanity will appear. But men like Paul Ernst, although they are lacking in this gift, are of the greatest importance to the development of the drama. They point out the way, lead from confusion to order, from negation to affirmation. The heir to their inheritance can only be a master to whom Humanity and Fate are equally dear, who, like Goethe, has probed the depths and scaled the heights and creates out of the store of his rich and human experience. Goethe himself never favoured "the drama of ideas." Characteristic is what he once said to Eckermann when he reproached his countrymen for their passion for an "idea." "They come to me and ask what 'idea' I tried to embody in my 'Faust.' . . . It certainly would have turned out a nice thing if I had wanted to hang on to the thin string of a single continuous idea such a rich, varied and many-sided life as the one I have depicted in 'Faust.' "

After all, though, "Faust" does contain an "idea," but it is wrapped up as it were in Goethe and his whole life.

Paul Ernst is too detached, too much the great teacher and wise man, too little the living man. His last drama, *Brünhilde*, treats the Nibelung saga from an absolutely new point of view. He has taken as his theme the mystery of love and the part it plays in Nature's household. A former play of his, called *Ninon de l'Enclos*, is founded on the well-known story of the son who, without knowing it, falls in love with his own mother. It is almost a Song of Songs on the laws of morality, a fact which shows more than anything else the purity of Ernst's ethics, for in any other hands this somewhat painful plot would

have been turned into a frivolous story. But what I have just said about his "bloodless figures" shows itself unmistakably in this work also, in spite of—perhaps even more by reason of—his crystal-clear verse with its concise antithesis.

Another representative of this school is W. von Scholz, who has recently published a *Dramaturgie Hebbels*. His play, *Der Gast*, is a sort of illustration of Goethe's wonderful lines:

Und so lang Du dies nicht hast,  
Dieses "Stirb und Werde,"  
Bist Du nur ein trüber Guest,  
Auf der dunklen Erde.

(And until thou learned hast,  
To "die to live again,"  
Thou art but a sorry guest,  
On this earthly plane.)

From unknown lands a master-builder comes to a city (the piece plays in the Middle Ages) and builds a stately towering Cathedral. The plague seizes the city; the builder disappears again into the far-off Unknown whence he came, leaving the cathedral for some one else to bring to perfection: "Stirb und Werde." The beautiful atmosphere around the line "Die, to live again," is woven into the play by picturing the ravages of the plague in the town.

*Meroe*, another play of his, is at present only in book form, but is to be produced soon by the Intendant of the Leipzig Municipal Theatre, Geheimrat Max Martersteig, who always has an eye for interesting new works. The theme is the typical fate—perhaps too typical—of a king, treated quite according to the canons of Hebbel. As well as that, he has adapted and "arranged for festival performances" Holderlin's fragment of a drama entitled *Der Tod Empedokles*. This work, by the mystic writer of the

beginning of the nineteenth century, is a religious mystery wedded to the music of the spheres. Empe-dokles feels himself part of the Universe, sees God in himself, and wishes to stand for God. He sacrifices himself by springing into Etna, thus returning to the elements. Now, when people pray to the gods, their prayers will be to him too. Christian and Hellenic thought are combined in this work in the same way as Hebbel has so often woven Christian and heathen ideas together. Nothing shows so well the struggle for a new inward fusing of religious feeling with Art, a struggle which has grown out of the instinct that they belong to each other, that Art will not attain to its highest beauty again until it once more draws its best nourishment from religious (but not "churchy") feeling, as of yore.

Moritz Heimann is a dramatist who has only recently been added to the roll. As he is no longer a young man, this speaks well for his long struggle with his art. But he, too, is lacking in the final touch: the humanising of his ideas, although his works possess so many valuable qualities that one greets them with pleasure. His first work, *Joachim von Brandt*, which appeared about a year ago, was a comedy; his second, *Der Feind und der Bruder*, a tragedy. These two dramatic forms show that the author tries to see the problems of life from both sides. Out of what are, apparently, paradoxes, he conjures up the truth. This demands quite a healthy mental exertion on the part of the spectator, but his habit, in the second play at least, of making all the characters speak in exactly the same way without the slightest attempt at differentiation, has a tiresome effect in the end. Real human beings cannot be made to live on the stage in that way. The clash of two opposing strengths, in the Hebbel manner, is

him, he places two great antagonists up against each other, the man in love and the pure woman. The former is Titus, the heir to the Emperor's throne, the God of the World, who has in the end to acknowledge himself the slave of Fate; the latter, a Jewess, beautiful in body and mind, who is love and purity personified on earth. Her husband has been crucified, but she remains inwardly true to him. The Emperor begs and prays for her love, but she holds to her vows, although his passionate words almost make her pulse beat in the same measure, and in the end conquers the conqueror before whom every one has hitherto bowed. Outward power stands against inward; a soul against the world. For her sake he promises not to give Jerusalem up to destruction; for her sake he will become a God of Conciliation and Peace, a spark from her soul having entered his. But the Jews stone her because she will not bring them the head of Titus as Judith did with Holofernes, and, as the Temple is already blazing, Titus lets the storming of Jerusalem go its course and even fans it on, for he recognizes that he is but a pawn in the hands of Fate. Peace cannot be on earth, and the reward of purity is death, for it is not understood. *Das ewig Weibliche* is not of earth; it can only reign in another world. The language of the piece is often daring and imaginative, yet concrete. For example: a child, half in sleep, tries to grasp at a star.

**Titus:** Oh beautiful sight! Such daring as thine, child,  
saw I never equall'd! Not even Cæsar dare  
grasp at a star!

Sharply defined antitheses delight one by throwing a light on some character or situation, as, for example, when the Jewess says:

a theatre whose management is always eager to give important new plays a first hearing. *Godiva* is the tragedy of a woman's soul. Out of pity and in spite of her womanly shame, she lays her soul bare (the nudity of the body is used here only symbolically) and, no one understanding her, finds death by her own hand. Here, too, the poet himself speaks more than the characters, so that the whole effect is that of outline rather than plastic form.

Hanna Rademacher, to whom Martersteig of the Leipzig Stadttheater gave a first hearing, has written a tragedy, *Johanna von Neapel*, which shows the influences of Hebbel and Kleist used in quite an independent way. Like some of Kleist's characters, Johanna von Neapel is wrecked by her own chaotic type of mind, for she falls in love with her own enemy. The principal theme of the work, however, is the eternal contrast between the two sexes. Unusual for a woman writer is the abrupt, almost hard, style of language adopted by Miss Rademacher.

Hans Franck, a newcomer, shows in his well worked out tragedy, *Herzog Heinrich's Heimkehr*, the tragic results of conflict between thought and action, between father and son, between power inherited and power won by personal deeds.

Great talent is shown by Hans Kyser, another new man, whose first work, *Medusa*, was still full of "Sturm und Drang" and wasted itself in exaggerations and extravagances, which are often, nevertheless, only signs of excess of poetical gifts. In his latest work, *Titus und die Jüdin*, he has made a good stroke for the better. He has the ability to seize an idea and embody it in lifelike figures. He has learned much from Hebbel. Like him, he takes for the frame of his picture a great period in history (the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus); like

him, he places two great antagonists up against each other, the man in love and the pure woman. The former is Titus, the heir to the Emperor's throne, the God of the World, who has in the end to acknowledge himself the slave of Fate; the latter, a Jewess, beautiful in body and mind, who is love and purity personified on earth. Her husband has been crucified, but she remains inwardly true to him. The Emperor begs and prays for her love, but she holds to her vows, although his passionate words almost make her pulse beat in the same measure, and in the end conquers the conqueror before whom every one has hitherto bowed. Outward power stands against inward; a soul against the world. For her sake he promises not to give Jerusalem up to destruction; for her sake he will become a God of Conciliation and Peace, a spark from her soul having entered his. But the Jews stone her because she will not bring them the head of Titus as Judith did with Holofernes, and, as the Temple is already blazing, Titus lets the storming of Jerusalem go its course and even fans it on, for he recognizes that he is but a pawn in the hands of Fate. Peace cannot be on earth, and the reward of purity is death, for it is not understood. *Das ewig Weibliche* is not of earth; it can only reign in another world. The language of the piece is often daring and imaginative, yet concrete. For example: a child, half in sleep, tries to grasp at a star.

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Sharply defined antitheses delight one by throwing a light on some character or situation, as, for example, when the Jewess says:

"To live without love—is that life?  
Titus: To live without thy love—that is death!

The rhythm often changes, according to the intensity of the scene or feeling of the speaker, as if to follow the finest vibrations of the heart's beat. The dialogue is often strikingly dramatic and has many fine climaxes. Sometimes Kyser follows antique methods as, for example, in the use of a Messenger, but introduces five voices instead of one for the sake of greater dramatic vividness.

Less happy, in fact, almost painful in its effect, is the side-episode of the brother and sister, King Agrippa and Berenice, whose passionate love for one another has no happier results than that of Titus and the Jewess. It was this parallel between their fate and that of the two principals—like the parallel fates of Gloster and Lear—which most probably influenced Kyser in introducing them into his drama, for they are of importance technically as emphasizing the fate of Titus and the Jewess. But in spite of some weaknesses and exaggerations, this drama is a very important piece of poetic work. We are justified in hoping much from Kyser's future.

In a certain sense, W. Schmidtbonn also belongs to this group of dramatists. His first play, *Mutter Landstrasse*, was a realistic piece colored with romanticism, reminding one of the work of Synge. He then went over to legendary themes and, with a somewhat daring and original hand, re-fashioned them in a modern spirit. His last two works are *Zorn des Achilles* after Homer's Iliad, and *Der Spielende Eros*. In the former, Achilles is shown as the noble soul bound down by the average crowd, with whom he neither can nor will have anything in common. This work, which as drama cannot be considered quite successful, is like a Song of Praise to Heroes,

to Individuality, to the Joy of Living, to Battle and Victory. It seems to have come from the innermost soul of the poet and compelled him to the work. That is why the rhythm of his verses is full of a stormy impetuous vitality which carries everything along with it.

His other work, *Der Spielende Eros*, consists of four one-act plays, and is a sort of serene idyll, in which there is a humorous echo of Susannah in her bath, the lady in this case being Helen. The freshness and independence of this poet, his absolute freedom from academical rules, and the evidence that he realizes the responsibility of the true poet, justify one in expecting something lasting from Schmidt-bonn.

This feeling of responsibility on the part of a poet, namely, that he voices the higher powers, that he has a message to deliver, seems to be lacking in a poet of fine talent, Herbert Eulenberg, who has been trying for several years to get a hearing. During his "Sturm und Drang" period he gave out a battle-cry which ran: "Beware of Hebbel!" And that characterizes him exactly. Like a Vulcan he throws from him work after work, all born of hatred, scorn, and fury against his times, which he can only see in a prosaic light. His fellow-creatures seem to him only worthy of contempt, and their laws and conventions only pedantic barriers to prevent a man from living his individual life. The principal figures of his plays are generally himself, and they are always engaged in a despairing or grotesque battle against the world and men. In his last play, *Alles Um Geld*, one of "God's creatures" is made to suffer cruelly at the hands of men who have made gold their god. The unsettled condition of his mind comes clearly to view in the desultory way he develops his scenes and

in the irresponsibility of his characters. His language varies between his own natural wildness and a forced old-romantic style, for Eulenberg is one of the men who long for the return of the old romantic time, who look backwards instead of forwards. Reality has disappointed him, not so much because he has striven with it honestly and now recognizes its hollowness, but because it does not fit in with his own romantic leanings. He is not the man to pronounce a just verdict on his generation. Nevertheless, there is much poetic beauty in his dramas. But out of hatred alone no great and lasting work has ever been created. Love has always done her share in the making.

I shall now mention briefly a few of the so-called Neo-Romanticists, with whom the desire to write comes from an artistic nature, while with Eulenberg the man in him has always been the driving force, the artist the secondary. The result of this is that, whatever faults one may have against him otherwise, his figures are endowed with the blood of life.

Eduard Stucken in his three dramas of the Court of King Arthur in the Land of Avalon has succeeded in reviving the atmosphere and feeling of the Middle Ages through rhymes of almost exotic sweetness. Ernst Hardt, in his *Gudrun*, retells the old Saga and, as in his earlier work, *Tantris der Narr*, again shows himself to be a sort of dramatic sculptor in the arrangement of splendid living pictures; Max Dauthendey, the lyric poet, in *Der Drachen Grauli* and other works, composes gloomy ballads in drama form; Franz Dülberg, whose earlier play was full of lyric beauty, now tries in his latest work, *Cardenio*, to make, with somewhat overladen pathos, an effective stage piece but of a very subtle and psychological theme, namely, the complete subjection of the body

to the Mind and Will. To them may be added this year, Max Halbe, the author of the play, *Jugend*, who, in his drama, *Der Ring des Gaucklus*, gives us a varied and brightly-colored picture of the Middle Ages. The author of *The Miracle*, Karl Vollmller, who at one time moulded his style on the magic verses of Hugo von Hoffmannsthal (by whom there is no new work to record this year), has now brought out a somewhat extraordinary piece called *Wieland* and described as a "Saga." It is the old legend of Wieland the Smith, the Icarus of the North, but the author turns it into a sort of allegory playing in modern England, which he connects in a fantastic and demoniacal way with the invention of the aeroplane. The language is intentionally formed on the stiff style of the old chronicles, but in spite of its many extravagances the piece shows so much mental alertness that it puts to flight all insistently recurring doubts, and gives the reader quite a fine intellectual stimulus.

Quite alone and independent stands Frank Wedekind. For those outside Germany who only know him casually from a few of his works, he must be a sort of psychological puzzle whom it is impossible for them to appreciate justly. It would take up too much space here to give a detailed study of him. His peculiar, almost disorganized nature is explained, on the one hand, by the constant turmoil of wild scornful criticism going on in his mind and what one can only call his fanatical prophecies of the creation of a new type of humanity in accordance with his own ideals; and, on the other hand, by his position towards woman, whom he has hitherto regarded from exactly the opposite standpoint to that of Goethe. He calls her the *Erdgeist* (the title of one of his principal plays), the "Spirit of the Earth" which drags

a man down; he hates her, but she has nevertheless a haunting fascination for him which will not let him go. His condition may best be described as Hypertrophy of the male element, while the really great poet must, like Goethe, have in him, as begetter and bearer of a Work of Art, something of the Woman also in order to be able to see and reproduce complete pictures of the world. Thus the result of nearly all his works is distorted pictures of a fantastic reality evolved out of his own suffering, from which he himself often looks, sometimes scornfully, sometimes despairingly, sometimes with the eye of a dreamer of dreams. His second last play, *Schloss Wetterstein*, is a terrible but, for him, characteristic piece, about which it is best to say nothing. His last one, however, *Franziska*, which he calls a mystery play, strikes another note. Woman has at last appeared to him as a Mother, and not merely the enchantress who drags a man through the mire and follows all mental aspirations with a deadly hatred and jealousy. This time he has drawn a kind of wild fantastic female Faust, in the last scene of which Franziska, after having touched the lowest depths of horror, appears with the halo of the Virgin, carrying the Child in her arms. In the figure of Veit Kunz, the impresario, who also regards woman as only the *Erdgeist*, it gives one a shock—as the “personal” scenes in his plays so often do—to note that he is evidently describing himself. One of the characters in the play says of Veit Kunz, during the dialogue:

“Surely, he’s the actor who does the principal part? My word, he does take his role seriously!”

Wedekind is always the actor who plays the principal part in his plays, and he always takes himself

very seriously indeed. If he could laugh at himself he would be happier; but this trait, which, according to Goethe, is the surest sign of the "Best," is not one of his.

A few words must now be said about Comedy, a very neglected quantity in the German drama. Its place is, for the most part, taken by satirical or farcical plays. And that is not to be wondered at. Pure comedy can only flourish when a nation has attained a more or less assured and coherent state of culture, not during a time of social feuds and opposing currents, for comedy has nothing to do with strife. Moreover, in a certain sense, comedy requires even more poetical gifts than tragedy. In the latter, Neo-Classicists like Paul Ernst, in spite of their inability to endow their figures and their fates with the lifelike spark, have nevertheless succeeded, through sheer strength of will, in producing proud and noble works which have the effect of tragedies, although they have almost a neo-academic flavor. Ernst and others tried their hands at comedy also, but their failure was complete, for in this kind of play the lifelessness of their characters was plainly felt. For real humor, men must be drawn as they live and move, not as abstract creatures nor as figures representing an idea. A real comedy-writer should, of course, stand above his people, but should be deeply rooted in them, should possess their best qualities, should love and try to fulfill their ideals. He should at the same time strike at their follies, but not with a rope of scorpions, as so many of the satirists do, of whom there is no shortage in Germany at present. One of these satirists is an interesting new man, Carl Sternheim, whose play, *Kassette*, represents a sort of dance round the Golden Calf — otherwise the money safe — by the

characters, who are really strongly-caricatured types rather than men.

A dramatist who has written many plays which are always a source of joy and pleasure, because they are flavored with his rich humor and his delight in men and their peculiarities, is Hermann Bahr, author of "The Concert." He has this year quite gone over to the ranks of the satirists in his social-political play, *Das Tänzchen*. In this piece he is evidently at great pains not to take sides with either party, but it is easy to see that the milieu is an inward strain on him. While his other works were born of a happy humor and delight in drawing human character, this play is evidently the outcome of anger and worked with shrewd calculation. In spite of that, however, it betrays its author, for he is, after all, the best comedy-writer of the German stage, by right of his alertness of intellect, his knowledge and love of mankind, his rich and pleasant humor, sometimes lightly flippant, sometimes lightly ironical, sometimes coming straight from his heart and going straight to the hearts of his hearers. To this must be added his enthusiastic temperament which, however, does not prevent his seeing things from all points of view, while his great energy and vitality enable him to take a lively share in public movements and all the burning questions of life. It is true that he does not always demand the highest of himself, but that is probably because of his eagerness to work, and the quantity of work he gives himself to do (he also writes very fine novels). His plays are, nevertheless, always interesting and stimulating and his dialogue delightfully fresh.

Of quite a different stamp of comedy-writer is the Bavarian humorist, Ludwig Thoma, in whom the scales are kept balanced by love and satire in equal

proportions. He has no lack of material on which to use his satirical pen, but he loves the peasants of his native land and describes them with racy, although by no means gentle, humor. In his most recent work, a one-act play called *Lottchens Geburtstag*, he has deserted Bavaria for once, and handles the very delicate theme of a young girl's introduction into life very frankly but without the slightest vulgarity, and when the fun is at its height, finishes up with a very clever and unexpected ending. One of the characters in it—Lottchen's father—is a gem of humoristic writing; a delightful caricature of the typical German Professor done in the well-known style of the *Fliegende Blätter* (the "Punch" of Germany).

Somewhat on the same lines as Thoma's play is *Pfarrhauskomödie*, by Heinrich Lautensack. A few other comedies of good quality are *Casanova am Rhein*, by Armin Friedemann and Paul Franck, and *Stärkeres Band*, by Felix Salten, whose dialogue is delightfully witty, clever, and finely turned.

I must also mention Otto Hinnerk, a real poet who has evidently followed Goethe's words: *Glücklich wer sich vor der Welt, Ohne Hass verschliesst* (Happy is the man who can withdraw himself from the world without hating it). His comedies are the result of a truly humorous outlook on life, and give us reason to hope that an epoch of great comedy is in store for us in the future. For the stage, his plays have still many weaknesses, but their dominant note is genuineness; their characters are genuine and their language is genuine. And from them all breathe the delight in life, the inward contentment, the joy in giving, which make his work a pleasure, although one can see through it all the pathetic little smile that is akin to tears. In his *Graf Ehren-*

*fried*, the hero flees from the careless, cruel, "mad-ding crowd" back to his own little corner in the country where (unlike Eulenberg and his heroes!) he at last finds real happiness in contented renunciation. His latest work, *Ehrwürden Trimborius*, is in the true vein of comedy. A wandering actor in Germany of the seventeenth century, in whom the longing for an ordered, settled life of useful activity has become stronger and stronger, gives himself out as a pastor, and settles in a little Residency where a new pastor is expected. In this capacity, he brings to the people for the first time love and peace and many blessings. But when the real pastor, a narrow-minded, bigoted man, turns up to claim his own, the actor is chased away. As a play, the piece has its faults, but it, too, comes from a poet who is of the stuff of which real comedy-writers are made, because joy in life is the true foundation of all real comedy.

In all that I have said here, my endeavors have been to point out the main currents in the modern German drama and to characterize their most important representatives, but it has been necessary, nevertheless, to pass over a number of interesting personalities and works in order not to make this survey too long. But before bringing this to a close, I should like to mention a man who is little known so far, because he has imposed on himself a task which is a most difficult but most important one by reason of its great significance for the future: the task of seeking the great problems of humanity in the present day and trying to reveal their bearing on the individual and society, on thought and deed, instead of treating them in a general sort of way by taking examples from history, like Ernst and his circle. This man is Hermann Horn, who for years has striven untiringly with this task, a work worthy

of the best energy of the finest writers. His last play, *Glück*, is on a question which has but one answer, but has, nevertheless, been answered in many different ways by many different epochs: What is Happiness? Horn's answer is: Not the attainment of external aims and advantages, of gold and power, but the cultivation and preservation of one's own soul. The "one thing needful" of Holy Writ. In his own heart should man build up his altar and worship the god-like there, a principle which Horn has already emphasized in a play with the expressive title, "*Altars.*" It is on these lines that the well-being of a new drama will be achieved, a drama rooted in the conscience and vitality of the nation and its times. Horn is the sign-post pointing the way.

FRANK E. WASHBURN FREUND.

## ACTING SCENERY.\*



THE play that is actor-proof has become familiar to the public, and needs no explanation.

Scenery that is manager-proof is something newer.

“Acting scenery”—“the stage set that is a member of the cast”—such are some of the phrases used to describe the latest experiments in mounting plays.

The public is not altogether clear as to what these terms mean.

The interesting question about scenery at present is not whether the futurists in scenic art—Gordon Craig, Max Reinhardt and others—are likely to succeed; because we know very well that if they keep their heads, and avoid fads and extremes, they can hardly help succeeding. The value of impressionistic outlines, emotional colors, illusive shadows, and breadth and simplicity of effect is recognized at once. The philosophy they are working out is not wholly novel. It has always been the province of art to make us see visions, rather than to put before us exact imitations. Impressionism is nothing new, on or off the stage. We know the mysterious effect of color, the delight of filling in vague outlines for ourselves, the imaginative stimulus of deep masses of shadow. We know, moreover, that the impressionist is apt to demand ample space, and the utmost adaptation in the direction and fall of light, conditions more easily met behind the proscenium arch of

\* From Miss Hunt's forthcoming book, "*The Play of To-day, Studies in Structure for the Student and the Theatre-goer.*"

the well-equipped theatre than on the wall of the ordinary art gallery.

The question is, what connection can simple pictorial scenery make with the modern, social, intimate drama, which has rather more to say to us to-day than spectacle or pageant or old romance?

It must be admitted that the tables, chairs, rugs, curtains and bookcases of an ordinary house do not suggest the use of impressionistic outlines or symbolic colors. Nor is it easy to fancy a domestic scene from Pinero or Galsworthy or Thomas acted against a back drop painted with a phantom drawing-room or library. We can only hope the new methods are as universally adaptable as they claim to be. For indeed some of the common stage furnishings have been so overworked in the interest of weak-minded plays that if anybody wishes to reduce them to outlines, we should not object. The tea-table, for example, and the telephone. Furthermore, if clearing stage interiors of some of their ottomans, sofa cushions, foot-stools, and smoking stands would make actors less restive, and teach them to keep still when they are not doing anything, we should be glad of the riddance. The grateful repose of the Irish Players seemed traceable in a measure to their economical stage sets.

But we cannot yet quite see the harmless necessary props of the social drama sketched on canvas, or made of cheesecloth and electric lights, or thrown out altogether. We await developments.

Meantime, much good has promptly come from these brave experiments in creating reality of mood and feeling (the only reality that counts) by means of unreal and inexpensive materials in illusive light and shadow. We are roused to full consciousness

of what we have long dimly felt—that costly stage realism has o'erleapt itself and begun to create unreality. Practical properties are all very well; but when they are so ingenious and expensive as to attract attention to themselves, they are as disillusioning to an audience as if they were cheaply and absurdly impractical. Distraction is distraction, as fatal to dramatic illusion when it results from foolish extravagance as when it is mere poverty of resources.

For example: A genuine telephone switchboard on the stage becomes at once the most unreal thing in the world. Being where it does not belong, and where it must have been difficult to place, it makes a sensation—which it would not in life. To the audience it is a constant reminder that the stage where it is fixed is a stage, and not the room which it pretends to be.

As a matter of fact, a cheap, make-believe switchboard that could not be manipulated at all would not destroy the illusion more completely.

For another example: The Dutch interior which served as setting for the entire drama of "The Return of Peter Grimm" failed of making precisely the right impression. It was criticized as being too crowded with details. In reality, the stage was no more crowded than it ought to have been to represent the living-room of an old house that had been occupied for many years by a family of Hollanders. We never criticize Dutch paintings as being "crowded." The trouble was that the scene, instead of creating a unified impression of a roomful of small objects, showed every one of the small objects themselves, thus dispersing the attention. In a painting it would be called the crudest of old-style art.

As to the statement that realistic surroundings

inspire the actor, somehow that does not ring true. And when extreme examples are urged, they sound positively puerile.

In one of the plays of last season, a certain stage represented a doctor's office with the usual furniture, including a large desk and a stack of card index boxes. The public was privileged to know—press notices, probably—that the desk was completely filled, drawers, pigeonholes and all, with letters and papers such as a physician would accumulate, all addressed to the stage doctor or signed with his name; that the stationery spread before him had his name and address on letter heads and envelopes; and that, to crown this triumph of managerial art, the index boxes were full of cards, every one of which was completely made out.

The actor who played the part of the doctor was experienced and accomplished. It really seemed possible that he might have kept his impersonation, even if some of those cards had been left blank. In fact, any actor who has hard training back of him is apt to resent the idea that his concept of a part can be made to depend on preposterous realism which is invisible or meaningless to the audience. An imagination that is superior to footlights, open flies, and canvas walls is not likely to suffer from the consciousness that an unused drawer in a desk is empty. Moreover, if an actor's hold on his part can be strengthened by mechanical means, it may as easily be weakened, in case some contraption is forgotten in setting the stage. What inspires the intelligent actor more than anything else that can be furnished him in the theater is a comfortable, commodious, well ventilated dressing room. Such humane accommodation could not, perhaps, be made

to figure in a startling press notice; but it would quite conceivably encourage better art.

Now as to the cure for the false realism which evokes no mood in the spectator, and creates no artistic illusion. It seems reasonable enough to say, as the futurists do, that it is useless to mitigate or change the old methods—that they must be swept aside, and a new beginning made. To the impartial spectator, a great deal of the laborious and costly scenery of the day does seem to be based on wholly unsound concepts of dramatic and theoretic effect, so that when it is “simplified,” it looks to be merely cheapened. And one point is by now very clear—that the new stagecraft, however inexpensive, is destined to be anything but cheap in its total impression. Its effects are costly, even when little money is used to create them.

To illustrate the difficulty in modifying conventional scenery according to imaginative methods: One of the latest elaborations of realistic stage setting is to create an appearance of depth, especially in interiors. Thus, if the place is a living room or a library, the doors must give into completely furnished rooms beyond, so that the scene may seem to be in a house and not on a stage. The room being furnished, not to say cluttered, to the last detail, there is apparently nothing for the manager to do but to burrow into the background. Often, however, he defeats his own ends. Because when a door is opened, the attention of the audience goes through into the inner room, losing all account of what the actors are doing and saying.

Now just about the time when realism-run-mad began to treat the stage as if it were a flat or a model house in a furniture store, the new stage-

craft began to devise precisely opposite effects. Its backgrounds are meant to create an impression of shallowness, and are skilfully designed, not to direct the attention of the audience to the depths of the stage, but to withhold or deflect it from the drop curtain, and to turn all eyes toward the actor, who, as the distracted theatergoer needs reminding, is, after all, more essential to the play.

This is one of the ways in which the two methods work directly counter to each other. No wonder the new craftsman thinks the crowded modern stage a poor place to try out his experiments in harmonizing moods and tenses.

Many of our contemporary social plays are so Greek in their simplicity as to make it appear possible that the simpler and more primitive traditions might be revived in staging them.

Then there are others which seem hardly separable from the most intricate of modern stagecraft.

However, we can all understand, with a little explanation, what is meant by "acting scenery," and how it favors the new methods.

When stage scenes are conceived by the playwright along with his characters, and are built into the structure of the plot, they are then so related to theme and action, and take such significance from their part in the dramatic scheme, that they create effects quite independent of anything that a manager can do for them—or to them. Outlines and suggestions are more successful in translating such effects than in working out unrelated scenes.

Usually when a scene furnishes an unobtrusive background, with everything in the right key, it does all that it can for a play. But it is possible for scenery to do much more. It can be made to take up the thread of plot and tell the story for a

few moments, thus relieving the colloquy of narration, description or exposition. We know that this can be done, because we now and then see, in conventional staging, a scene that really does act, thus becoming, as the new experimenters say, a member of the company.

The best illustration I can recall off hand is from a play which is sincere and honest, but not great—"The Fortune Hunter." The setting for the third act does three things at once, and does them effectually. It tells the story of an eventful winter; it helps out the exposition after the long interruption; and it gives the new act a vigorous forward impulse.

All after this fashion:

When the curtain falls on the second act, it shuts from view Sam Graham's drug store, dingy, poverty stricken and forlorn, a rusty stove in the middle, a few stale drugs on the shelves, the mere travesty of a soda water fountain at one side. It is a day in September.

The playbill gives the information that when the curtain rises again it will be spring. Moreover, the audience knows, as it generally does by the time a play is half over, what will be the culmination of the plot. But it is in a state of animated suspense as to just how everything is going to be brought about.

When the curtain lifts upon the third act it shows a white, glittering, electric lighted, ultra modern drug store, stocked with the most pictorial of patent medicines, the most decorative of candies and cigars, and displaying an imposing soda water fountain like an altar to all the gods at once.

The audience gasps with delight at the transformation, satisfaction in its own cleverness (for it knew Henry Kellogg would make good), and anticipation of what is coming.

The scene has acted. It is in the cast.

Now the point is not exactly that impressionism could here be used for realism, though I incline to think that in commonplace scenes like this the new staging would work very well. The point is merely that the scene is so skilfully related to the dramatic action, and takes so much of its meaning from what has happened before and what is going to happen afterward, that it has more carrying power in itself than can be given to it by the most superhuman ingenuity of stagecraft. It would be effective even if poorly and cheaply staged in the old way.

To go a step further:

Suppose that, for the sake of introducing some other scene, it was necessary to pass over the transformed drug store without showing it to the audience. Much narration of what had taken place, and much description of the new store, would then have to be written into the text. But an audience never cares to hear what has been done, if by any process of crowding and telescoping events it can be allowed to see for itself. The play would be weakened.

In the playwright's struggle to rid himself of nondramatic and story-telling expedients, scenery, rightly used, can be one of his greatest helps.

Another illustration of the power of scenery to act is found in the tent scene in Barrie's "The Admirable Crichton." This picturesque interior tells the story of two years of life *a la* Robinson Crusoe on a desert island; opens the third act intelligibly without reminiscence; and is interesting and amusing on its own account. It is emphatically in the cast, and would lend itself to artistic experiment with simple materials. If proof is needed that the whole scene is a member of the company, it is only necessary to recall the end of the act. The incident that

sends down the curtain is, like all dramatic crises, seen as well as felt by the audience, there being an appeal to the eye simultaneously with the appeal to the emotions. When the boom of the gun is heard, the hero hesitates, visibly struggles with himself, exclaims "Bill Crichton's got to play the game," and then, while the audience breathlessly watches, pulls the lever that lights the signal to the receding ship. Thus the culmination grows directly out of the material surroundings. The scenery is as truly a member of the company as Crichton or Lady Mary. It would please the futurists.

By way of contrast, conceive of an act (and modern plays furnish many examples) which would play almost equally well against any background. Perhaps the stage is set with an entrance hall which, merely to make a brighter picture, has a door and window opening into a garden. But neither hall nor garden is necessary. If that scenery were left behind or burned up, something else out of the storehouse—a living room or a library or a verandah—would do as well. The speeches have not grown out of the surroundings, nor have the surroundings reacted upon the mood and spirit of the characters. The colloquy has been manufactured in some rarified atmosphere, remote from the world.

Now when the imagination of the audience is not in the least stimulated, it cannot be expected to fill in outlines or to people shady corners with dim figures. Nothing can be done with an act like this but to stage it as literally as possible. Impressionism is helpless with an act so detached from the plot, mood and theme of the play. The scene is not a member of the company.

Some one recently said that a stage director ought to be able to think in scenery and electric lights.

But for the finest effects, it is the dramatist who must think in outline, color, light and shade all the time that he is thinking in the speeches and actions of his characters. Then his plays will be so harmonious and organic, and will take such admirable shape, that it will be easy to stage them by simple means; and, *per contra*, hard for the most realistic manager to distort or damage them. The spirit and mood of each act can be quickly captured and easily interpreted, and there will be no gaps to tempt the intrusion of unrelated novelties. And it is to be hoped that, when there are more plays like this, if stage pictures are "held" anywhere, it will not be at the end of the acts, where they destroy all continuity, but at the beginning, so that they can talk a little in their own dumb language, before the speeches begin.

At present, scenes that help to get the story told seem rather casually introduced into plays. Acting scenery is not one of the ideals of dramatic art. But when the new stagecraft begins to prevail, its influence will be corrective and sanative. With nothing spectacular to help them out, plays will strengthen in all that is truly dramatic, and will have so much scenic art in their very structure that they can be interpreted with an economy of ways and means hitherto undreamed of.

And incidentally there ought to be one social and progressive outcome; namely, cheaper seats in the theaters.

The new stagecraft is at least deserving of our interest and good wishes.

ELIZABETH R. HUNT.

## PLAY-MAKING.



THE TITLE of this book\* suggests a collaborative effort. "Play-Making" sounds like the simple wording one would expect from Mr. Archer; "A Manual of Craftsmanship" sounds like a bit of bravura on the part of the publishers. Individual, fresh, stimulating this book is, but a "manual" for would-be playwrights it certainly is not. Indeed, the very first words of the book are: "There are no rules for writing plays." With insistent modesty the author makes this idea basal in his treatment of his subject. "No teaching or study can enable a man to choose or invent a good story, and much less to do that which alone lends dignity to dramatic story-telling—to observe and portray human character." Something, however, Mr. Archer believes may be taught, as to the "art of structure." Nor does he write for all readers, not for those who have "no bump of drama"; not for those with such "an instinct for this art that a very little practice renders them masters of it." He writes for the "many people with moderately developed and cultivable faculty." In a foot-note he adds: "It may be hoped, too, that even the accomplished dramatist may take some interest in considering the reasons for things which he does, or does not do, by instinct."

Mr. Archer divides his book of four hundred and seven pages—to which is appended a helpful Bibliographical Note listing easily accessible editions of the plays cited in the text—into five "Books"—

\* *Play-Making. A manual of craftsmanship.*  
Wm. Archer. Small, Maynard & Co. Boston, 1912.

"Prologue," "The Beginning," "The Middle," "The End," "Epilogue." "The Prologue" treats "The Choice of a Theme," whether a playwright starts, or may start, from an idea, a character, or a situation; and attempts to distinguish broadly between "Dramatic and Undramatic." This same chapter, in discussing "The Routine of Composition," commends the scenario as a preliminary to play-writing, while insisting that the dramatist must, even when working with a scenario, keep himself "plastic," so that his characters or imagination may guide him into unplanned but desirable ways. In "Dramatis Personae," the last chapter of "Book I," the young playwright is wisely urged to keep down his characters to the smallest number which can properly carry out his purpose.

In "Book II," under "The Point of Attack" and "Exposition, Its End and Means," Mr. Archer considers where the drama, particularly in Shakespeare and Ibsen, has chosen to begin its work. "The First Act" treats the necessity for some division into acts and for creating "tension," or suspense, if the first act is to carry over to the next act any interest it has aroused. In "Curiosity and Interest" Mr. Archer distinguishes brilliantly between the satisfaction that complicated plot causes and the more lasting satisfaction gained from pleasure in how the story is told or the play as a play is developed. In "Foreshadowing, not Forestalling," is treated the need of hinting or stating enough information to arouse or to maintain "tension." Here the danger in so closing an act that it seems complete and does not pique our curiosity as to what may follow is made clear.

"Book III" discusses "Tension and Suspense," really movement, of which Mr. Archer says: "When

once a play has begun to move, its movement ought to proceed continuously and with gathering momentum, or if it stands still, the stoppage ought to be deliberate and purposeful." "Preparation: The Finger Post" treats the skillful hinting a dramatist must do if he is to keep his audience clear as to his plot and eager for what is suggested as lying ahead. "The Obligatory Scene," the third chapter of Book III, discusses whether a dramatist must always provide the scene which the earlier parts of the play have led the audience to expect before the final curtain falls. Mr. Archer coins a word, *Peripety* [Greek, *peripeteia*] for such a turning of the tables, such a complete reversal in fortune, as marks Shylock in the courtroom scene. To the place in drama of the peripety he devotes a chapter. The last three divisions of Book III are: "Probability, Chance and Coincidence"; "Logic," i. e., the logical working out of the plot; and "Keeping a Secret." As Mr. Archer points out, the strongest reason for not making a play depend on some secret kept till almost its close is that after the first night it is at best an open secret.

"Book IV" treats "Climax and Anti-Climax"; "Conversion," that is, the complete change in character on which many a play has depended; "Blind Alley Themes—and Others," certain themes which Mr. Archer believes can never be presented with satisfaction to an audience, and certain topics or conditions he believes too shop-worn for further dramatic use; and, finally, "The Full Close," what the last act usually is and what it ought to be.

In Book V Mr. Archer writes of "Character and Psychology," making a deft and very helpful distinction between "character-drawing, the presentation of human nature in its commonly recognized,

understood, and accepted aspects," and psychology, the exploration of character, the bringing of the hitherto unsurveyed tracts within the circle of our knowledge and apprehension. In this Book he discusses, last of all, "Dialogue and Details," the latter treating blank verse, the soliloquy and asides.

I have run over the contents of the chapters thus in order to outline Mr. Archer's general plan, in order to do justice to some of his excellent defining, and that his independence in nomenclature might be evident. He uses, whether wisely or unwisely, very few of the catch-words ordinarily found in books on dramatic technique. He finds, as in "tension" and "peripety," his own terms. This points to the chief excellence of the book, its individuality. Mr. Archer quotes others very little, except as plays give him needed illustrations or some living dramatist writes him of agreement or disagreement with some of the ideas stated. What Mr. Archer says is the result of his own keen thinking for more than a generation as one of the leading dramatic critics of that period, and he says his say in his own words. As was to be expected by anyone who knew this theatrical criticism of Mr. Archer, keen illuminating analysis leading to very helpful definition is frequent. Mr. Archer is at his very best in the chapters on "Curiosity and Interest" and "Character and Psychology." Whoever now writes or speaks on dramatic technique will inevitably make use of this lucid exposition of the difference between the attention of a first-night audience and that of succeeding audiences, and will inevitably use his masterly distinction between character - drawing and psychology.

Yet it is a great pity Mr. Archer did not subject his book to more rigid revision before sending it

forth. In the very brief "Preface" he states that "more than half of the following chapters" were written "on shipboard and in places where I had scarcely any books to refer to." Yet there was "subsequent revision," which should have done away with frequent vagueness, some blindly referential illustrations, and at least one amusing bit of English. For instance, on p. 20, Mr. Archer writes: "The dramatist who knows any particular phase of life so thoroughly as to be able to transfer its characteristic incidents to the stage, may be advised to defy both critical and managerial prejudice, and give his tableau-play just so much of story as may naturally and inevitably fall within its limits." But, who ever met a young playwright who did not think he had just that knowledge of some "phase of life?" From such a statement the maturer dramatist who has learned, through hard experience, a little self-doubt must turn away in irritation. Whether any story is necessary in a "picture-play," if so to what extent, and even just what a "picture-play" is, have either not been treated or have been passed over with the utmost rapidity. This is all so hasty as to be not merely inadequate, but really confusing. Obviously, Mr. Archer feels distinctions here, which, unmindful of the first precept for the dramatist, he neglects; he does not "put his ideas across" to his auditors. Such writing, and there are other instances, creates not a new principle, a new idea, but a new doubt.

Early in the book Mr. Archer has his slur at the pedants who profess "to bring down a dramatic decalogue from the Sinai of some lecture-room in the University of Weisnichtwo." Yet, when writing of unity he divides it into "Unity of concoction, unity of concatenation and structural or organic

unity," surely he has caught the trick of obscuring ideas with words as cleverly as any of these scorned Academics. When in discussing the obligatory scene he writes: "The judicious playwright will often ask himself, 'Is it the actual substance of this scene that I require, or only its repercussion?'" that *repercussion* makes one fairly sure his self-critical dramatist is a "high-brow" writing "literary drama." In writing of an art which bends all its energies to simplifying for public presentation the complex in life, why not be simple, Mr. Archer?

So, too, when "The Marrying of Ann Leete" of Granville Barker is used in illustrating plausibility in dramatic conduct, a knowledge of the play is implied so intimate that the force of the illustration will be seen without explanation. This passage [p. 281] should be developed or cut out.

One wonders whether something has dropped out in the following, p. 379, in regard to W. V. Moody's "The Faith Healer"; "If the last act of 'The Faith Healer' were as good as the rest of it, one might safely call it the finest play ever written, *at any rate, in the English language*, beyond the Atlantic." Of course the italics are mine. They suggest a view of American life such as had a waiter I once met in the tiny inn of the courtyard of the lonely Spanish Monastery at Montserrat. He spoke particularly bad French. As he waited on me, I said: "Do you mean to stay always at Montserrat?" "No, Monsieur [it was the year of the Chicago World's Fair], I go in a month to be a waiter at the Chicago Exposition." "Yes, but you do not speak any English." "No," he replied with the most delicate intonation of reproof, "but I speak French, as Monsieur knows, perfectly." "Ah, yes, but what good will that do you?" "What, and does Monsieur not know that everybody

for hundreds of miles about Chicago speaks French perfectly!"

There is, too, in the book a curious underlying omission. Never once in these many pages does Mr. Archer make clear that any produced play is the coöperative work of author and actors. The last are treated, as young dramatists are far too fond of treating them, as absolutely negligible. Yet surely, if nowhere else, he should have been told that in writing dialogue the dramatist cannot, if he will, neglect the actor, for good stage dialogue is more compact than that of the novel just because it will be rounded out into its full meaning by the intonation, facial expression and general action of the cast. A book on play-making that treats the actor as negligible in the producing of a play is strange indeed. Moreover, the very desire of Mr. Archer not to be positive and to lay down rules makes him at moments confusing. He almost writes distinctive criticism, only to qualify it in text or foot-note. [See especially his comments on Ibsen's plays and p. 210.] But when some play almost is something bad or good, but as a foot-note says isn't after all, the reader longing for positive aid is baffled and confused. The situation is somewhat similar with constructive hints or principles for play-writing. Mr. Archer is, however, more willing to say *Don't* than *Do*. For instance, he writes [p. 7]: "It might in many cases be wiser to warn the aspirant to keep himself unspotted from the play-house. To send him there is to imperil, on the one hand, his originality of vision; on the other, his individuality of method. He may fall under the influence of some great master, and see life only through his eyes; or he may become so habituated to the current tricks of the theatrical trade as to lose all sense of their

conventionality and falsity, and find himself, in the end, better fitted to write what I have called a quack hand-book than a living play.” Then realizing that this is a little like the famous advice of the indulgent mother of the nursery rhyme, whose daughter asked, “Mother, may I go in to swim?” Mr. Archer adds: “It would be ridiculous, of course, to urge an aspirant positively to avoid the theatre; but the common advice to steep himself in it is beset with dangers.” Of course, there is always danger that a young playwright frequenting the theatre may mistake theatrical device and trickery for fundamental laws of the drama, but if he cannot live through this to clearer vision, he is little worth saving. Moreover, what writer has not had his time of discipleship under some “master”? Finally, how is the “aspirant” to know where to draw the line between not going to the theatre at all and “steeping himself” in the stage? It is wobbly advice like this which, though sometimes grounded in sound sense, tries to cover too much space in too few words, that again and again irritates.

When, too, Mr. Archer tells the playwright what may be summed up as: “If you have a scene to present, don’t think at all of the stage, but just see the scene you want” [see p. 72], we have another of these hastily incomplete bits of advice. Of course we are not to make life fit the stage, but the stage represent life. Of course, too, first of all the dramatist must see his scene just as he has really seen it somewhere, but if he never thinks of it in relation, as a second process, to the stage, the producer may do some thinking and even talking that will not tickle the vanity of the playwright. Young authors are, for instance, particularly fond of sets with a wall down centre stage, quite forgetting that this wall shuts

off nearly half the audience from what takes place on one side of it.

With all its decided merit, then, this book is at times baffling and confusing, because too rapidly phrased, or phrased with too little clear recognition of the needs and states of mind of those who will turn to it most eagerly—the young playwrights.

What the book does best is to fulfil the hope already quoted from the foot-note of p. 7. It gives, often in definitive fashion, "The reasons for things which the accomplished dramatist does, or does not do, by instinct." Those who already know something of the art of play-making will welcome the book for its admirable analyses, which will settle for them, not how to meet certain dramatic problems nor even how to approach them—the work of a manual—but the exact nature and causes of these difficulties. Called "Play-Making: Some Analyses, Definitions and Suggestions," it would offer only what it provides admirably. It is not a manual. It is not a book for beginners. It is a book bound to be helpful to those who can think their way from its analyses and wise comments to underlying principles. In any case, individual, fresh, contributive, as it is, it is most heartily welcome.

GEORGE P. BAKER.

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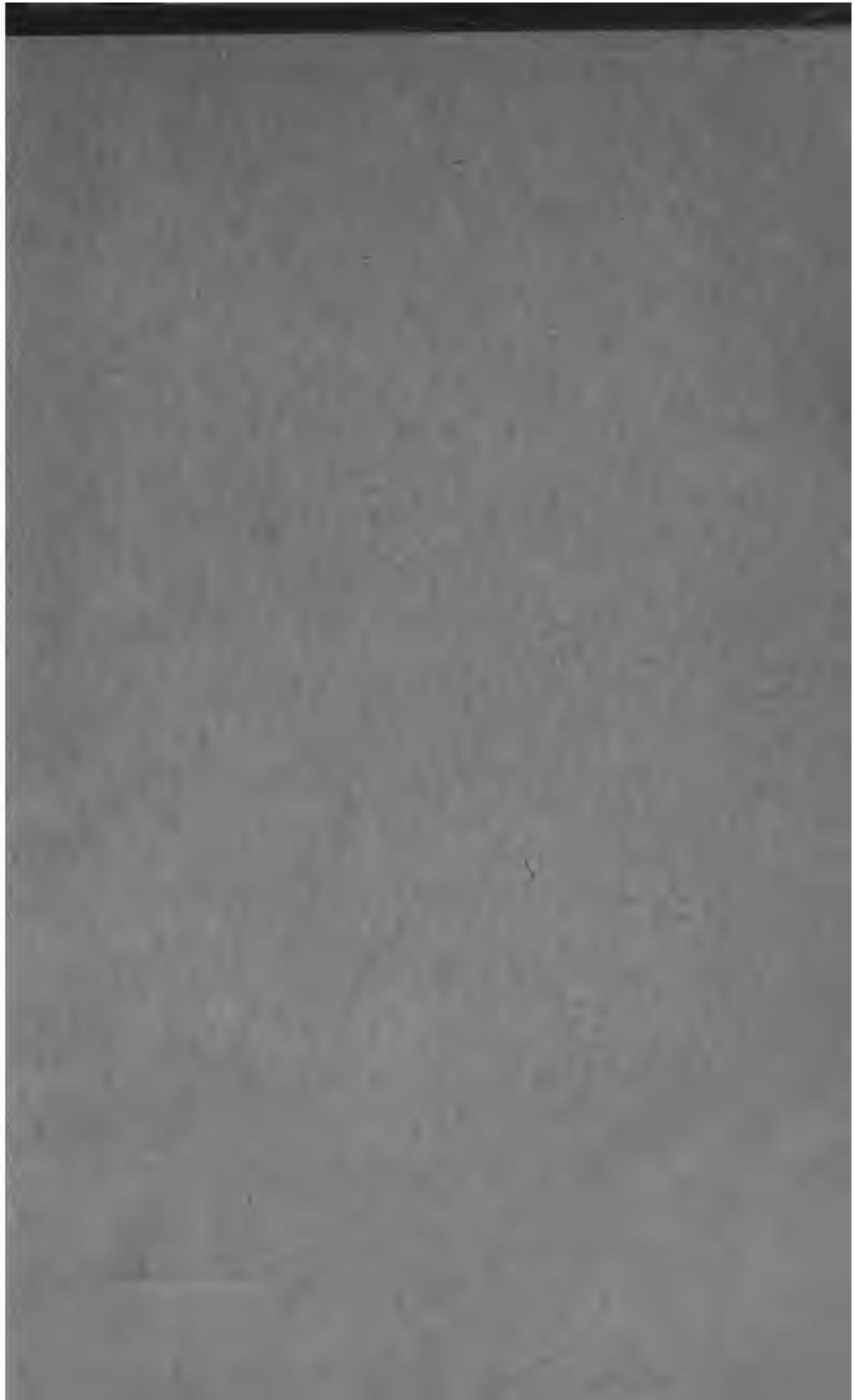
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